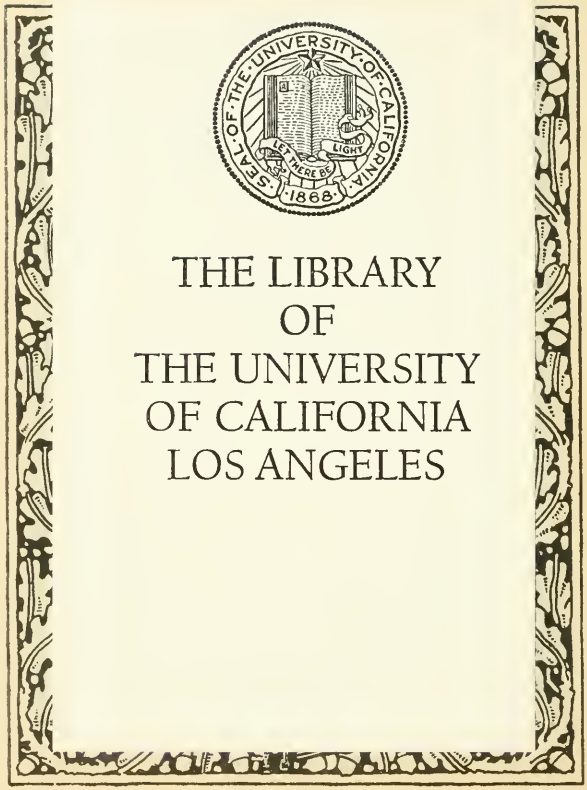
COMMON-SENSE THEOLOGY

C. E. M. JOAD



THE LIBRARY
OF
THE UNIVERSITY
OF CALIFORNIA
LOS ANGELES

COMMON-SENSE THEOLOGY

PHILOSOPHY

A Popular Introduction

By Dr. Wilhelm Windelband

Translated by Joseph McCabe

Cloth. **21s.** ***net.***

"Many of the old philosophic problems are stated in a fresh and illuminating way, and the author has a rare gift for explaining how different schools of philosophic thought arise."

Literary Guide.

T. FISHER UNWIN LTD LONDON

COMMON-SENSE THEOLOGY

By C. E. M. JOAD, *Author of* '*Essays in Common-Sense Philosophy*,' '*Common-Sense Ethics*,' '*The Highbrows*,' *etc.*

T. FISHER UNWIN LTD
LONDON: ADELPHI TERRACE

First published in 1922

(*All rights reserved*)

Printed in Great Britain by
UNWIN BROTHERS, LIMITED, THE GRESHAM PRESS, LONDON AND WOKING

D
1646
J5707

CONTENTS

PAGE

INTRODUCTION 7

CHAPTER I
BERGSON AND THE PHILOSOPHY OF CHANGE . . . 13

CHAPTER II
THE UNCONSCIOUS AND THE THEORY OF THE LIFE FORCE 40

CHAPTER III
THE LIFE FORCE IN EDUCATION 118

CHAPTER IV
THE LIFE FORCE IN LITERATURE AND ART . . . 163

CHAPTER V
KNOWLEDGE AND FACT IN A WORLD OF CHANGE . . 227

INDEX 285

643393

INTRODUCTION

ALTHOUGH the title of this book is *Common-sense Theology*, it is not about God. God as popularly conceived possesses many attributes, of which the most noteworthy are goodness, omnipotence and creativeness. It is unfortunate that for the existence of these attributes there is no evidence, with the exception of that of creativeness. The world undoubtedly exists, and unless it generated itself, somebody or something created it. But a God who is bowdlerised of all qualities except creativeness is scarcely recognisable, and in order to avoid raising undue hopes, it is better to give Him another name. In this book He is called the Life Force, the justification of the words used in the title being, that theology is the name we give to discussion about God, and common sense to the attitude towards Him which refuses to credit Him with any qualities beyond those, or rather beyond that one, which He manifestly exhibits. It is to be regretted that no sooner is the term Life Force substituted for the word God, than the tone of the discussion is automatically lowered. Critics have formed the habit of adopting a familiar and patronising tone towards the Life Force, which they would never dream of extending towards the theologians' God. When, for instance, they happen upon it in a book, they welcome it as "our old friend the Life Force," pat it on the back, and gently chaff the author for introducing such a well-worn hack in order to extricate himself from his metaphysical difficulties. Thus the Life Force has come to occupy a position which varies between that of a poor relation and a *deus ex machina*, and in neither capacity does it receive the respect which is due to antiquity.

The reasons for this attitude are not far to seek. The Life Force is not omnipotent like God, but limited: hence it can neither hit back when we insult it, not reward us when

we pay it homage. It is not inevitable like Fate, but provisional: it is not necessary therefore either to fear it or to propitiate it. It is not irresponsible like blind chance, but purposive; and there is therefore neither logic nor comfort in ignoring it. The belief in the Life Force is in fact the only form of belief which is a rationalisation neither of our vanity nor of our fears. There is nothing to inspire us in a conviction of its existence, and there is nothing to distress us in a knowledge of its power.

Men have created God in their own image, because the existence of an all-powerful and all-kindly Being, working and watching in their interests, flatters their conceit and invests their existence with purpose and significance. Men have imagined an ineluctable and all-compelling Fate because it shoulders the responsibility for their actions and removes the intolerable burden of human freedom. But a belief in the Life Force panders to no innate longing and satisfies no deep-seated need. Why, then, should we hold it? I am afraid that the only argument I can adduce in its favour is that it appears to square with the evidence. To judge from the history of speculation, this has usually been found an unconvincing reason for entertaining a belief; but I can offer nothing better, and those who prefer beliefs, which are dictated by considerations of comfort and cheerfulness to those which are merely true, will find the Life Force as a form of mental diet arid and unsubstantial enough.

If the Life Force were all-powerful things would not be so bad: the realisation that we are nothing more than weapons in the grasp of something or somebody which has created us for its purpose is humiliating enough; but it is some compensation to know that the something or somebody is bound to win. But a belief in the Life Force does not even give us the certainty of being on the winning side, so that there is little enough to be said for the palatableness of the belief: so much the better then for its truth, seeing that we tend to believe palatable truths because they are palatable, and unpalatable truths because they are true.

The familiarity of "our old friend the Life Force" is, however, more easily to be explained than the implied antiquity. Why is the Life Force old, or rather, why is the

theory that asserts the Life Force old? It is true that it has had a considerable vogue, and that since Schopenhauer invented "The Will" and Bergson followed it up with the *élan vital*, Vitalism in some form or other has been prevalent enough in modern thought. But an antiquity of a hundred years or so is nothing remarkable in philosophy—God himself is considerably older—and as the various forms in which expression has been given to the theory have tended to contradict rather than to elucidate each other, each may claim for itself a considerable measure of novelty.

There is, of course, a sense in which every metaphysical theory is as old as human speculation, being discovered and ignored in each successive age until such time as the thought of society has moved up to the level necessary for its comprehension and acceptance. Once this level is reached, the theory is said to be discovered, when all that has happened is that its discovery has for the first time been noticed. In this sense, then, the Life Force theory dates back to Heracleitus' aphorism "πάντα ρεῖ," if it is not still older. From any other point of view it may venture to make a real claim to novelty. That reality is change has been asserted, as I have already hinted, with varying degrees of confidence and dogmatism from Heracleitus to Bergson. That there is an immanent principle of life which expresses itself in all the thrustings and pulsings of the world of sense, of thought, and of matter has been a common-place since Schopenhauer. But the attempt to saddle the immanent principle with the responsibility for some part of reality only, leaving the whole realm of matter outside its scope, has been made less frequently. Such a view leads to an unfashionable dualism, and flouts our incurable tendency to postulate a unity. But the belief that truth must be a unity has no foundation in necessity; truth may be a patchwork, and since a unity requires its upholders to account for error, inconsistency, pain and evil as part of the unity, or else to explain them away as delusive appearances, it seems preferable to sacrifice the emotional comfort of the belief that all is One and that the One is good, to the necessity of accounting for the facts as we find them, in the hope that the complications and untidinesses of the resultant belief will be ascribed to the perverseness of the

facts, and not to any inherent cantankerousness on the part of its author.

A theory which is consistently worked out on these lines is, comparatively speaking, a new one, and critics who persist in the habit of addressing the Life Force as an old and rather boring acquaintance, because in some form or other they have met it in the works of popular authors ever since they began to read, must remember that the antiquity of philosophical theories normally exceeds that of their critics, and that it is possible for the Life Force to be a comparative newcomer on the speculative stage, even though a critic has met it before. We need, then, be disturbed neither by the condescension of the critics, nor by the implied charge of staleness. It is only natural that men should condescend to a Force that possesses neither the dignity of God nor the inevitableness of Fate : it is only natural that they should fail to be impressed by the merits of a theory to which they have grown accustomed ; for a truth has only to be repeated sufficiently often to cease to appear true.

A word may be added on the form in which the theory is presented. The dialogue form practised often since Plato, has been practised rarely with success, and is accordingly unpopular to-day. The reason is not far to seek. Philosophers have endeavoured to invest their dialogue with dramatic qualities : they have used it as a vehicle for the expression of their wit, and they have sought to make their personages living characters of flesh and blood. But philosophers are not normally endowed with the gift of repartee, nor are they as a rule pre-eminent for the exuberance of creative imagination, a circumstance not to be wondered at, seeing that, if philosophers were really gifted with these talents, they would devote them to the more lucrative and pleasing task of producing fiction proper in the form of plays and novels, instead of spending their time in ploughing the thankless and wearisome sands of metaphysical speculation.

The result is that the philosopher's jokes have fallen as flat as his characters, and the dialogue form has lapsed into disrepute. If, however, the dialogue is used solely as a device for ensuring brevity and lucidity in the exposition of ideas, and no attempt is made to convert the protagonists from

mouthpieces of argument into personages of flesh and blood, it will be found to be not without advantages. In particular it enables the writer to state and to meet objections to theories which he may be propounding, without having continually to resort to such clumsy expressions as, "it may be urged on the other hand," or "a critic might retort in the following terms," or "it is now time to consider what arguments may be adduced against the view we have adopted." The device of employing different characters and affixing to them definite labels so that their general point of view is known and may be assumed to underlie any observations they may make, enables the writer to short-circuit the processes of argument and to state his theories and the objections to them with the minimum of circumlocution. For the dialogue form, then, it is claimed that it makes for clarity in statement and brevity in exposition, and by this claim it must stand or fall.

The scene of the dialogue is laid in an English country mansion. The wealthy manufacturer who has purchased it, finding that country society has perished from inanition, endeavours to relieve the boredom which seems inevitably to attend the declining years of the successful business man by reviving the patron system. The weakness for metaphysical speculation which so often manifests itself in later years in the systems of those who have spent their lives in dealing with hard facts, leads him to select as the objects of his patronage persons whose interests are philosophical rather than artistic. The need of the philosopher and the psychologist for a patron is not less acute, because more rarely satisfied, than that of the poet. This circumstance should cause no surprise. Poetry may at least claim to please, even though it does not sell, but the effect produced by the philosopher is one of annoyance rather than of entertainment. Moreover, philosophy being useless as a means of obtaining a livelihood, is rarely demanded at our universities, where a limited number of professors lecture to a diminishing quantity of students. Professorial posts being few, the philosopher must possess an independent income, obtain a patron or go to the wall, and unless big business can be induced to take up this most esoteric of hobbies on a generous scale, the Universe will soon fall an unchallenged prey to the scientists.

In the present instance our patron has assured himself of sufficient dividends from speculative business to be able to afford speculative metaphysics, thereby gaining credit for a disinterested love of truth for its own sake, and being enabled to maintain a company of professional critics and philosophers who dispense free wisdom to all comers. John and Anthony are two of the inhabitants of this philosophers' asylum; Mr. Banks and Professor Cameron two of the visitors, of whom Mr. Banks wants to know and Professor Cameron to criticise. For the rest, it is hoped that the dialogue will be found self-explanatory.

My thanks are due to Professor T. P. Nunn for kindly reading through the manuscript of the last chapter.

C. E. M. J.

Common-sense Theology

CHAPTER I

BERGSON AND THE PHILOSOPHY OF CHANGE

Object of Discussing Philosophy.

MR. BANKS. I want to have a talk with you about philosophy. Before doing so, however, I ought perhaps to mention that I am not a philosopher either by temperament, training or profession. I know no technical terms, and such philosophy as I have read seems to me to be largely unintelligible.

JOHN. I don't wish to be rude, but may I ask why, if this be the case, you desire to discuss philosophy with me? From your appearance I take you to be a business man.

MR. BANKS. I really don't see what that has to do with it.

JOHN. I am sorry. I am afraid that again you may think me rude, since I have noticed that nobody likes to be taken for what he is, least of all, a business man. Whatever you are, don't look it, is usually regarded as a recipe in a sentence for success in life. I referred to your appearance, however, because it is unusual for business men to have either the desire or the capacity for philosophical pursuits, and indeed, having regard to their occupation, it is not to be expected that they should.

MR. BANKS. What you say is true on the whole. But I have always had a desire for useless knowledge, or perhaps I should say for understanding, which the mere accumulation of facts, which passes for knowledge among most, does not seem to satisfy. It is for this reason that I have dabbled a

little in philosophy, which spends its time discussing knowledge without acquiring it.

My wife too, who is a Methodist, is at times a little trying in her temper, and a little dogmatic, not to say narrow, in her convictions. One wants a refuge . . .

JOHN. Of course, of course. I quite understand, but need we . . .

MR. BANKS. Enlarge on my wife? Not at all! Quite unnecessary. Well, a few months ago I happened to pick up a book of Bergson's, *Creative Evolution*. I found him easy to understand, persuasive and convincing. Previously I had been a sort of hazy Idealist, a follower of Hegel and Mr. Bradley, so far at least as I could understand them. But Bergson seemed to prick the bubble of the Absolute and to make philosophy at once simpler and more concrete. Then I got *Time and Freewill* and *Matter and Memory*, and I had better say at once that the result is that I am a convinced Bergsonian. Now, what I wish to discover from you is whether there are any grounds upon which his theory may be validly impugned—I don't mean upon points of detail, but upon fundamentals?

Bergson is notoriously hostile to the ordinary philosopher and to the ordinary intellectualist methods of philosophy. It is perhaps natural then that his views should not be generally accepted by philosophers; and indeed I understand that he has lost caste with them as a philosopher, in proportion as he has won favour with the man in the street by popularizing philosophy. Now, what I want to know is whether this attitude to Bergson's work on the part of orthodox philosophers is the natural antagonism of men to a theory which, if true, would render their methods superfluous and turn their salaries into unearned incomes, or whether they have real difficulties to bring against his position? In a word, is the criticism of Bergson simply that of men whose salaries depend on their not letting him refute them, or is it sincere, and if so on what grounds?

JOHN. Well, I am not a Bergsonian, and my salary is independent of the truth of the Bergsonian philosophy and the success of its methods. Perhaps, then, I am in as good a position as any to try to indicate the difficulties which

exist in his philosophy. But first tell me whether, when you say you are a convinced Bergsonian, you are referring to a certain conception prevalent in modern thought, to what Schopenhauer calls the Will to Live, Shaw the Life Force, Wells a Limited Deity, Bergson the *élan vital*, and the biologists Vitalism, or to the special form which this general view assumes in the philosophy of Bergson.

MR. BANKS. I meant to refer to Bergson's philosophy only. But I am interested to hear that this philosophy links on to a movement generally prevalent in modern thought, and should be glad to hear more of this general notion when you have discussed more particularly the philosophy of Bergson.

JOHN. The point is important because to my mind it is possible, and even desirable, to accept at any rate in part that attitude to the Universe as a whole, and to the position of human life within it which is implicit in this general trend of modern thought to which I referred—it is really like a common strand running through the systems of many different thinkers—while refusing to adopt many of the conclusions of M. Bergson.

However, the important thing in the first place is to consider these conclusions and the methods by which they are reached, and with this object I propose, with your consent, briefly to outline the main position which M. Bergson adopts, so that we may satisfy ourselves that we are in agreement as to what exactly his conclusions are before I venture to criticise them.

Sketch of Bergson's Position.

MR. BANKS. Yes, that will be the best procedure. Nor will it, I think, be a long or difficult task to outline the main features of Bergson's position.

JOHN. No. For his view of the Universe is essentially a simple one. It is characterised by the breadth and uniformity of its design, rather than by its elaborateness or complexity. Perhaps it is in this very fact of its simplicity that we shall detect a weakness. Truth may prove to be a dull and complex mosaic, rather than a beautiful and rounded whole. However, I must not anticipate.

Let us consider then, first, Bergson's metaphysics and then his logic.

MR. BANKS. I had better be quite clear in the first place what you mean by these words. By Bergson's metaphysics I take it you mean his view of the nature and constitution of the Universe, by his logic his view of the nature of the human mind, or at any rate that faculty of the human mind by which the Universe is known.

JOHN. Yes, that is what I mean. First, then, as to his metaphysics. Bergson conceives of the Universe as a constantly changing flux. There is for him only one real thing in the Universe and that is change. It is not even correct to speak of there being a Universe in which change takes place, because there is no Universe that changes; there is, in fact, nothing except change. In this connection we are expressly warned by Bergson against conceiving him to mean by the Universe, or indeed by any living thing in the Universe, something which changes constantly but which remains the same through change. A thing that lives is a thing that endures not by remaining the same, but by changing unceasingly. This characteristic of enduring by changing is a characteristic of living things only; it is not a characteristic of dead material things, as these are commonly conceived: they endure through or in spite of change. But in the case of things that live, their life is change itself. It is a constant, unceasing flow, and the Universe itself is a constant unceasing flow. What, then, is matter? In order to answer this question we must go on to consider Bergson's logic. What is for him the nature of knowledge, or at any rate, that we may not beg the question, of that faculty that knows the Universe as it really is? Now for most philosophers this faculty has been the faculty of reason or intellect. For Bergson it is not so. Bearing in mind his statement that life is change, it is clear that the most important thing in life is not thought but activity; and the intellect has been evolved not, as one might have supposed, for the purposes of thought, but for the purposes of activity. Now it is clear that a vision of the world as a continual, changing flow, without modification or distinction, would not make for effective action. Action in such an environment would be like action in a uniform,

impenetrable fog, in which no one thing was clearly distinguished from any other thing, and everything was continually changing into something else. The intellect, therefore, sees the Universe not as it is, but in a form suitable for action, namely, as a collection of solid, static bodies extended in space. These solid, static bodies, which are the things of which the Universe is, according to intellect, composed, are what is called matter. Whether this view of the Universe is imposed upon it by the intellect, or whether the intellect finds matter in the Universe in the form in which it sees it; whether, in short, this is a false or distorted view, or whether it is a correct though partial one, is a point to which I shall return in a minute.

It is, however, in any event plain that Bergson regards this view of the Universe, which is taken by the intellect as being unreal or incomplete, in some sense in which the view of it taken by another faculty is both real and complete. This other faculty is intuition. This intuition can be, but is not, I think, correctly described as a combination of intellect and instinct. It is a faculty which Bergson has a difficulty in describing, but is most clearly manifest in the works of great artists and men of genius. These enable man to penetrate further into reality by disclosing to him their own vision of reality, which is in some way a deeper and truer one than his. This vision they achieve by means of intuition. Reality, mind you, is change, and change is life. Change and life and reality are in the long run identical and synonymous. In order, then, to achieve a true knowledge of reality, intuition has only to concentrate itself on the process of living. The intuition of life *is* knowledge of reality; and for this philosophy there is no theory of knowledge other than the consciousness of living, which is also a consciousness of duration. It is by means of intuition or consciousness of life, then, that we arrive at truth, by means of intellect that we equip ourselves for action.

I think this brief *résumé* of Bergson's main position will be sufficient for my purpose; but I should be glad to know, before we go on, whether I have described his philosophy more or less as you would have done yourself, or whether you think that I have misrepresented him on any point.

MR. BANKS. No, I think you have summed up his main position clearly and with admirable frankness. You have not, of course, gone into detail, but you have said enough to show, I think, that we are agreed as to the main essentials of Bergson's philosophy. I just wondered whether you were not perhaps making some confusion for yourself over the question of the view the intellect takes of reality, which I must confess seems to me clear enough.

Criticism. The Intellect's View of Reality.

JOHN. That is likely enough; for the whole philosophy seems to me such a mass of confusions, inconsistencies, insufficient premises, unjustifiable conclusions, and following *non sequiturs* that I am almost driven to account for my failure to accept it coupled with its great popularity, by the supposition that I make difficulties and inconsistencies for myself in what is a perfectly harmonious whole; just as intellect is supposed to make matter for itself in a perfect flux. However, since you have mentioned this particular point, let me begin my criticism with it.

MR. BANKS. Yes, I should be glad to see what your difficulty is.

JOHN. The difficulty here really resolves itself into two difficulties. The first is this. Bergson postulates one real thing, and only one, in the Universe: this thing is time or change. The word by which this conception is usually translated in English is "duration." We have to think, to use one of Bergson's metaphors, of a kind of centre from which the whole stream of evolution, that is the world, flows out continually. And yet even the centre is not a concrete thing, a real source: it is a "continuity of the outflow." There is therefore no distinction even between the centre and that which flows from it. The centre and the outflow, in so far as you can speak of them separately, are together reality. Reality is in fact spoken of as a perfect flow without division or individuation of any kind.

MR. BANKS. You mean that the real character of reality is homogeneous.

JOHN. Yes, that is what I mean. Now, we are to conceive of the intellect as operating upon this perfect, homo-

geneous flow, and carving out of it solid objects extended in space, and concepts such as quality, number, blueness, and so forth for the purpose of action. The first question I want to put is, why, if reality *is* like this, a great blur without distinction or individuation, should intellect carve out of it some objects rather than others? Why, in short, should it carve out a chair rather than a hippopotamus?

MR. BANKS. For the purposes of action, of course, because a chair is convenient for the action of sitting down and a hippopotamus is not.

JOHN. But if there is no rudimentary distinction of any kind in the real, if there is not some elementary kind of blot or mark which the intellect can, so to speak, work up into a chair, we must assume that the intellect simply carves a chair out of nothing, a piece of matter out of a blank oneness or whole, which has no more the suggestion of a chair about it than the suggestion of a hippopotamus. This interpretation would mean, then, that the intellect created the chair. But Bergson does not call the intellect creative. It is, for him, simply the faculty which takes a certain view of reality, a view which, in virtue, of course, of what it finds there, works up something into a chair which is a concept useful for action. Does it, then, find there after all some rudimentary distinction or articulation, some mark in the real which is the raw material on which intellect works when it presents us with a chair instead of with a hippopotamus? But if so, reality is not perfect and indivisible change; nor is it a solid, homogeneous flow as Bergson would have us believe. It contains differences within itself, real differences which can be worked up by intellect into the objects we know. This is my first difficulty. And there is a further point which is really part of the same difficulty. You would agree, would you not, that there is some kind of difference between a chair and a table?

MR. BANKS. Yes, a kind of difference. Not a real one, I suppose, for reality itself is without differences. The apparent difference is due to our intellectual apprehension of these objects, since our intellect takes a partial or unreal view of reality for the purposes of action.

JOHN. Well, let us call it an illusory difference, the appearance of a difference only. But tell me this: how out

of perfect and indivisible oneness can you evolve even the appearance of difference? How, in fact, if reality is one and the same through and through, do you and I come to think that a chair is different from a table, even if our thought is erroneous?

MR. BANKS. But, as I said before, the difference is not real, it is illusory.

JOHN. Quite! But what then? Do you not see that it is as difficult to conceive how error and illusion can be generated out of perfect being and perfect reality, as to account for the emergence of diversity from perfect oneness? Whether you say that the difference is real or illusory is immaterial, for we can explain neither the fact nor the illusion of difference if we start with a reality which is entirely one and perfectly homogeneous.

MR. BANKS. I will consider the point. What is your second difficulty with regard to the intellect's view of reality?

The Conception of Matter.

JOHN. My second difficulty is really a group of difficulties which centre round the Bergsonian conception of matter. If reality is one general flow of movement, whence do you obtain dead matter? The usual answer is that matter is the result of an interruption of the flow. Matter is the inversion of the general movement, the flow going backwards as it were, this inversion being brought about by an interruption. Now what is this interruption? It cannot be matter itself, for matter is caused by the fact of there being an interruption: matter is, in fact, the result of the interruption, not the cause. Are we to assume, then, that reality is twofold: first a general flow or movement; second, something other than the flow or movement which interrupts the flow and so causes matter, but which is not matter? What then becomes of the homogeneous character of reality?

MR. BANKS. I think you are under some misapprehension here. Matter is not the result of the interruption: it *is* the interruption, the detension of the tension I think Bergson calls it.

JOHN. You are right. He does sometimes speak of it as the interruption itself, and I will deal with this conception

in a moment. Before doing so, however, I want to insist that he does also speak of it as the result of an interruption which is other than itself. There are at least two of the famous Bergson metaphors—or, if they are not Bergson's, they are from his follower Le Roy, who has caught his master's trick of metaphor—which bear out this conception. One is the conception of life or of the vital surge as a rocket whose burnt-out stick, which is matter, falls to the gound after the rocket has spent its force. The other is of life as the jet of a fountain and matter as the drops that fall back as the creative movement, which is the fountain, ascends. Matter is in each case, you see, likened to a reverse or downward movement brought about by an interruption or a spending of a forward or upward movement. And in speaking of matter in this way Bergson destroys the conception of the single and uniform character of reality.

Let us, however, suppose that matter is, as you say, itself an interruption of the flow and not the result of an interruption. We are here asked to conceive of something which is not the general flow or movement, which is, however, co-existent with it, which is equally real with it, and which interrupts it. It is clear, then, that we are again driven to depart from our conception of reality as one and simple, and to suppose it twofold in character : it is the nature of reality to be, first a general flow or movement ; second, something which interrupts this flow or movement, and is called matter. Matter, then, is not something illusory carved out of the real by intellect for the purpose of action. Solid matter extended in space is real and fundamental : it is the interruption of the flow. We have thus in two respects already departed from the conception of a uniform real, namely, a homogeneous flow from which we started. But two further difficulties have now come into view.

You will remember that Bergson often describes matter as action unmaking itself, or as a reverse movement. But a reverse movement is not the same as a mere interruption. The phrase " a reverse movement " implies that matter, instead of being a mere inert, solid thing extended in space, as it appears to us, partakes itself of the quality of life. It moves, it flows, it changes only in a different direction from

the movement of life itself. The metaphors I referred to a moment ago support this idea. Matter is the counter-current, the same current, it might almost seem, as that which is life, turned back upon itself. Why, then, does the intellect always select this particular reverse movement for the view of reality which presents us with an inert matter, and never the movement called life? Why, in fact, if matter and life are both movements, do we call matter "matter" and not "life"? If life changes and matter also changes, in virtue of what principle does the intellect dub the one static and inert, and not the other?

I think, however, that this difficulty is only one of many that spring from a confusion with regard to matter that is fundamental, and it is the recognition and establishment of the fact of this confusion which constitutes the second of the two further difficulties to which I referred a moment ago.

MR. BANKS. You are being terribly precise. Does it really matter whether this difficulty is a first or a further, or the first or second of two furthers, or not, so long as it is a real difficulty?

JOHN. Very much. If philosophers would only preface their arguments with a statement of what it is precisely they are endeavouring to prove or to disprove, and what is the precise character of the particular argument in question as distinct from and in relation to their other arguments, there would be much less confusion in philosophy. The main difficulty in finding out what a philosopher means is that he will not tell you what he is going to talk about and why, before he talks about it.

I do hope, though, that I am not confusing you by these divisions and subdivisions of difficulties, reasons, and so forth. I find, on the whole, as I say, that it conduces to clearness to divide up in this way, even at the cost of a little repetition.

MR. BANKS. You mean that the method sometimes involves considering the same point twice over, though in different connections and from different angles. I suspect, for instance, that you are now going back to the point that matter is unreal because it is the view that the intellect takes of reality.

JOHN. Yes, that is so. But first tell me whether you find the method confusing ?

MR. BANKS. No. I agree with you that it makes for clearness. But it wants concentration to follow it. You can only concentrate to the necessary extent in a retreat like this. In London it would be impossible.

JOHN. London provides a continual series of stimuli without giving time to concentrate on any of them. The mind is for ever jogged, never at rest with itself. However, we must not digress so early in our enquiry ; so let us return to the confusion about matter which I regard as fundamental. It is this : Is matter, that is, the collection of solid, inert bodies extended in space, unreal or is it real ? Is it an illusion due to the kind of view that the intellect takes of reality, or does it exist in its own right, in the form in which it undoubtedly appears to exist ? I ask this question because it seems to me that Bergson's philosophy supplies us with two contradictory answers.

Why Matter is Unreal.

The first of these is the answer I have already partially considered, the answer that matter is unreal. It is unreal for a number of reasons, of which these two are, I think, the most important.

The first reason for the unreality of matter which Bergson gives is that it is the view of reality taken by the intellect. The intellect, we are told, makes " cuts across the living flow " for the purposes of action. It puts in, as it were, stops and checks which are not there, just as the cinematograph takes a series of momentary static pictures of the movement which is life, which can only be restored to a semblance of life by restoring the original movement, this being done in the case of the cinematograph by turning the machine. The momentary static pictures are like the chairs and tables of life, bodies of inert matter into which the intellect cuts up the flow. Chairs and tables are in fact the moulds into which intellect presses the living, moving stuff of which reality is made. Now, if movement or change is the only reality, it is clear that intellect, which represents this motion as static

matter extended in space, is falsifying the real. The reality which is viewed by the intellect is therefore an illusion.

In the second place matter is unreal because it only comes into existence at an unreal point of time, that is, in the present. You will be aware that on Bergson's view time is an indivisible movement. The past, the present and the future are one. The present is simply the point at which the past merges into the future and at which the future presses forwards to meet the past. Now our own duration is one with the whole reality and duration of the Universe : try to seize the present and it has gone ; it has become the past before you can seize it ; and that is because our duration is a continuous flow, part of the flow of the Universe, in which attempts to create divisions, such as those between past, present and future, must necessarily be futile, since it is incapable of division. The so-called present is, in fact, the result of the cutting-up process applied by our intellect to our own duration, just as matter is the result of the same process as applied to the Universe. It is not surprising therefore that the appearance reality presents to us at an unreal point of time is an unreal appearance. " Matter exists only at that sharp cutting point at which the past is entering the future, a point which in abstraction from memory and will had no existence." " And so," we are told, " the whole seeming dead weight of matter is a view only of universal life." So Professor Wildon Carr, the leading British exponent of Bergson !

So-called matter, then, is movement just as everything else is movement, and when it appears to us as static objects extended in space it is a delusive appearance.

So much for the first answer that Bergson gives to the question, Is matter unreal ?

Why Matter is Real.

It is rather startling, then, to find this philosophy in other places insisting on the reality of matter. It insists on this reality mainly as a result of its strenuous denial of the conception of the intellectual view of the world described above, the conception in which the intellect is thought of as imposing its view upon a reality which is somehow different. When we said that the intellect falsifies matter by cutting it up, we

said something which the Bergsonian would deny explicitly, though implicitly, I think, he would have to admit that it follows from his conception of the intellect and of matter. Explicitly he asserts that the order that the intellect shows us in nature is a real order, and chairs and tables therefore do exist, as they appear to us to exist, in reality, instead of being subjective impressions in our minds caused by the peculiarities of our intellectual apparatus. The order of chairs and tables, of solid material objects extended in space, is found by the intellect to be existing apparently independently of it, and is not imposed by the intellect upon a reality which is fundamentally different.

This, I must confess, seems to me simply a flat contradiction of the arguments already considered for the unreality of matter. I do not see how this contradiction is to be resolved. And the Bergsonian supports his assertion of the reality of the material order in the face of his own arguments by reasoning which seems to me as fallacious as the position it supports.

This reasoning is as follows. Why do we imagine that the order the intellect shows us in reality is imposed and not found ? Because there is a natural tendency of the human mind to suppose that without an imposed order there would be disorder. This tendency is, however, delusive. Take away the imposed order, and you would have not disorder, but just the absence of that particular order, that is, another kind of order. There is no such thing as unreality or disorder : what there is, is the absence of a particular kind of reality or a particular kind of order. Therefore the argument that the intellect must impose the order it really finds, because the absence of this order would be chaos, is a fallacious argument. Thus the Bergsonian reasons in support of his assertion of the reality of the material order.

But the reasoning is incorrect. There is no illusion on the part of the human mind such that, if it existed, it would make us believe that the absence of a particular order would be disorder, or if there is, it is not an illusion to which anyone reading Bergson's philosophy would be likely to fall a victim. Clearly the absence of the intellectual order of reality would suggest to a student of Bergson not disorder, but the order of reality known to intuition, that is, the real order of reality

which is a moving indivisible flux. Thus we are justified, and justified on Bergson's own premises, in assuming that the intellectual order which presents us with solid matter *is* imposed and not found, unreal and not real, since he has already told us that the real order of reality is something different from solid matter, namely, movement pure and simple. You cannot have it both ways. Matter cannot at one and the same time be part of the general flow and movement—or, if you prefer it, of a reverse flow and movement—and also solid, static objects extended in space.

As a matter of fact, Bergson does not believe matter to be solid, static objects extended in space, but does believe it to be a general movement opposed to the movement which he calls life. But if intellect is the faculty of knowing matter as extension in space, it is clear in this event that intellect is taking of an entity which is one thing, a view which represents it as something else, and is therefore imposing its view upon that entity and not representing it as it finds it. It is also clear that the reply which consists in saying, " You only think intellect imposes its view of a static order because you are under the illusion that without that order there would be chaos," is no reply at all, since the alternative to the false order of static objects in space imposed by the intellect is not chaos or anything of the kind, but is, on Bergson's own premises, a general flow of movement which is in point of fact the real order.

I am afraid this has been rather complicated. What do you make of it ?

MR. BANKS. I think I have followed you. You assert, do you not, that Bergson's real view of matter is that it is a form of movement ?

JOHN. Yes.

MR. BANKS. You also point out that intellect represents it as extension in space ?

JOHN. Yes.

MR. BANKS. You then proceed to ask how, in virtue of these two statements, intellect can be represented as finding and not imposing the order of reality it shows us.

JOHN. That is the point, or rather that is one of the points, I was trying to make. Does it convince you, or, if it does not, how do you get round it ?

Mr. Banks. I confess I do not quite see my way at the moment; but I did not expect to be able to answer you on the spot when I came to you for criticism of Bergson. I must give the matter consideration. There is only one thing I wish to ask now. You said matter could not be at the same time part of the general movement, or, if I preferred it, of the reverse movement, and also static extension in space. Why if I prefer it? Waiving for a moment your point about matter being either an interruption or the result of the interruption, surely there is no doubt that Bergson does conceive of it as the reverse movement of the general movement, and not as part of it. It is not a case of any preference of mine.

John. Yes, I think you are right in saying that he does so conceive of it. I only slipped that in because there are passages which suggest, so ambiguous is the general conception of matter, that matter is part of the universal flow, and not a flow in an opposite direction. One of Bergson's similes in particular lends colour to this view. You know how Bergson is celebrated because of the appositeness and ingenuity of his similes, and I admit that, generally speaking, they help him to bring out his points in a clear and vivid way. Sometimes, though, they prove on examination to be ambiguous if not misleading. The one to which I refer is an instance of this kind. When accounting for the fact that matter, which is really movement, appears to us to be static, recourse is had to the simile of two trains running in the same direction and at the same speed, or at slightly different speeds on parallel railway lines. Now if the trains are really going at the same rate each will appear to an observer in the other to be stationary. Similarly matter appears to us who are moving to be stationary, just because matter is moving too. This appearance of immobility to the observer in the train will still be produced in a less degree if one train is moving slightly faster than the other, though I am not clear why the conception of different rates of motion need be introduced at all. Is it suggested that matter moves faster or slower than life? . . .

But you will, I am sure, agree in any event that the appearance of immobility is obviously dependent on the trains moving in the same direction. If they are going in different

directions, each will appear to the other to be travelling at something like double its real speed. This simile, then, is only appropriate, and can only be used to explain the apparent immobility of matter, if we assume matter to be part of the general flow, travelling in the same direction as life. Either there is one more inconsistency here in the conception of matter, or the simile is hopelessly misleading. But I have already said enough about matter. As for Bergson's metaphysics in general, I have little to add. They seem to me to be vitiated because of the failure to account for the appearance of matter on premises which assume the existence of one general movement. If, in short, the *élan vital* is real and universal, then matter is inexplicable whether you treat it as appearance or reality. Mind, I am not impugning the existence of the *élan vital.* I am only denying its capacity to account for matter. Personally, I prefer to keep the reality of matter intact, while accepting the *élan vital* with such modifications as the real existence of matter may demand. But this is by the way. You did not come, I take it, to hear my views, and . . .

MR. BANKS. You quite mistake me; I should be only too interested.

Bergson's Logic.

JOHN. Excuse me, but I don't think you would. You would be more interested in collecting further criticisms of your favourite philosopher that you may have the pleasure and the honour of defending him later at your leisure. So let us proceed to a brief survey of his logic. About this I have comparatively little to say. But I should like in particular to draw your attention to what I suspect has always given the enemy some cause to blaspheme, that is, Bergson's faculty of intuition. It is upon this faculty that his whole theory of knowledge, in so far as he has one at all, depends, yet its nature and powers are almost as obscure as those of matter.

You can see the importance of this faculty by comparing Bergson's position with that, for instance, of such a man as Kant. You know Kant's position, of course?

MR BANKS. What are you thinking of in particular?

JOHN. Well, for Kant there could be no theory of knowledge. There were two worlds: the world of things as they are and the world of appearances, which are the forms in which the things as they are are known by mind. By the mere fact of knowing a thing mind changes it, or, if you prefer it, imposes its own interpretation of it upon it, the result being that mind knows always its own interpretation of the thing and never knows the thing as it is. There is thus for Kant no theory of knowledge, for knowledge is always of appearances to mind, never of reality.

Now Bergson postulates the same division of the Universe into two worlds, the world of reality as it is, that is, a constant flow or change, and the world of appearances that consists of solid objects extended in space. Unlike Kant, however, he does not deny the possibility of knowing the world as it really is: we do have knowledge of this world, but it is through the faculty of intuition, and not of the intellect, that we have it. Intellect is set over against the world of appearances, the world of solid objects extended in space, intuition against the world of reality which is constant and unceasing change. Intuition therefore is of enormous importance. It is the faculty *par excellence* whereby we became acquainted with reality, and incidentally it is the faculty by means of which we realise the truth of Bergson's philosophy. It is Bergson's philosophy that asserts reality to be an unceasing flow: it is by means of intuition that we become aware of the flow.

What, then, is intuition? Bergson finds some difficulty in telling us. Roughly, perhaps, it may be described as glorified instinct.

MR. BANKS. What do you mean by glorified? You are, of course, aware that Bergson expressly warns us against identifying intuition with instinct.

The Faculty of Intuition.

JOHN. By glorified instinct I mean instinct ennobled by reason, and that is, I think, what Bergson's description of intuition comes to. But let us consider more precisely what instinct ennobled by reason means.

The *élan vital* in the course of that outward surge from

the centre which is evolution, divides itself, as it were, along three divergent channels: vegetable life, animal life and human life. The difference between these three forms of life is, you will remember, one of kind and not of degree, and the principal difference of kind between the animals and man consists in the fact that while man has developed intelligence, animals have developed instinct, intelligence and instinct being the characteristic features of the two essentially different attitudes men and animals bring to life. But having at one time interpenetrated each other, both instinct and intelligence retain something of the common origin from which both have sprung, namely the vital force itself, and the consequence is that all instinct has a trace of intelligence and all intelligence a fringe of instinct.

Man therefore does have instinct as well as intelligence, and it is possible for the two to fuse, or rather for instinct to absorb intelligence into itself. When this process happens we have an instinct which, instead of being blind as was formerly the case, is now conscious of itself and able to consider its purpose and to enlarge it. "The proper task of philosophy"—I am quoting from Bergson's follower Le Roy —"is to absorb reason into instinct, or rather to reintegrate instinct in intelligence." The result is intuition, and intuition is therefore pre-eminently the faculty by which philosophy is to be pursued and truth achieved.

I hope that in this brief outline I have not travestied the Bergsonian conception of intuition?

MR. BANKS. I think you have been fair; but you left out what Bergson says about the intuitional character of all the higher manifestations of the human spirit, as they appear in the genius or the artist for example.

JOHN. Oh well, that is supplementary and follows from the main conception. Art penetrates through to truth, or to a kind of truth: intuition is the faculty by which we arrive at truth; it is to be expected therefore that the artist should work by intuition. Intuition is often spoken of as if it were a kind of instinctive inspiration plus introspection; that is, an inspiration conscious of itself, and as such the term would apply equally to the lucky guess of the great scientist which is the origin of the new hypothesis subsequently verified by

experiment, to the insight of the prophet or poet, and to the vision of the artist. Bergson incidentally and somewhat arbitrarily denies it to the scientist, whose activities he regards as confined entirely within the circle of known fact; but this is by the way.

Is there anything else that I must needs include in my account of Bergson's intuition, or do you agree that what I have said will suffice as a brief and fairly accurate account?

MR. BANKS. I don't much like it. You have divested the concept of much of the nobility of thought and poetry of language in which Bergson clothes it, but I don't know that there is anything I can actually quarrel with.

Biological Difficulties in Conception of Intuition.

JOHN. That is the penalty of the analytical method. I am trying to take Bergson's philosophy to pieces and see what it is made of. The process is not conducive to the retention of beauty. If you had taken your wife to bits on the day you first fell in love with her, I doubt if even you would have been enamoured of the parts; but they would at least have cohered together, fitted into a whole. Some of Bergson's, I am afraid, do not, and this is particularly the case with regard to the conception of intuition: it is full of contradictions. Consider this one in the first place. Man is, according to Bergson, the one success of creative evolution: in man alone is consciousness freed. The animal and the vegetable worlds are residues which man has so to speak left behind on the evolutionary path. Now the animals have instinct, man has intelligence; but truth is achieved by instinct dashed with intelligence, that is by intuition: it is not grasped by intelligence. What has happened, therefore, is that man, the privileged creature, the succcess of evolution, can only know truth by a faculty which survives in him from the animal world as a kind of haphazard deposit, like the human appendix, a superfluous residue that will one day in all probability disappear, a faculty, moreover, which is only possessed in a highly-developed degree by beings who are professedly the failures of evolution, the tentative experiments left behind by evolution in its attempt to achieve man.

Are we to suppose that the animals alone have the pre-

rogative of knowing truth because they have instinct, while man has only this misleading faculty of intelligence? And if the animals go the way of all evolution's failures, and are finally used up and thrown on the scrap-heap, are we to assume that the realisation of the nature of reality will disappear from the world, and that therefore the truth of Bergson's philosophy, together with all other kinds of truth, will be as a memory lost to man, while its last remaining subscribers among the animals and insects, who alone possessed to its full degree the faculty of intuition by which truth could be apprehended, will perish from the earth in pursuance of the sad fate of all beings who are to be written down as failures through their unfortunate power of knowing truth?

Consider this second point: Bergson, despite his denial of fully-developed instinct to man, is nevertheless bound, in spite of the conclusion at which we have just arrived, to admit the possibility of man arriving at truth. Has he not done so himself? What, then, is the process? It is a process whereby intellect absorbed into instinct goes out beyond the facts as known to science, and constructs, as it were, an inspired hypothesis.

It is this composite faculty, the faculty of instinct controlled by intelligence, which is the faculty *par excellence* for the apprehension of truth. Instinct controlled by intelligence is in fact the criterion of truth. But the intelligence which is privileged to control instinct or intuition is not the ordinary intelligence which has been evolved for the purposes of life. It is a kind of super-intelligence which has, as it were, absorbed instinct, and which, by adapting itself to the needs of instinct, is enabled to break through "the inviolable circle" of the intellectual view of reality. It is all very complicated; but the upshot of it is to make intuition both judge and jury in its own cause. Instinct controlled by intelligence is the criterion of truth, but the very intelligence which controls instinct is only elevated to the controlling position because of its infusion of instinct. So we traverse the full circumference of a vicious circle. In effect it is intuition which both apprehends the truth and guarantees the accuracy of its own apprehension.

These are *a priori* points, and they are mainly concerned

with inexactitudes and contradictions in the account of intuition and its relation to intellect. But consider the matter empirically. Are the psychology and the biology upon which the notion of intuition is based correct? As regards the latter there is, I understand, an almost unanimous refusal among biologists to accept the difference in kind between human, animal and vegetable life postulated by Bergson. They insist on the unity of all organic substance, and regard each form of life as a modification at different levels of a development which is fundamentally homogeneous throughout. Instead, therefore, of a rigid distinction of faculties such as that postulated by Bergson, whereby instinct is allocated to animals and intelligence to man, they expect to find, and do find, the same faculties in every form of life in different stages of development. Instead of animal instinct retaining "traces of intelligence" and human intelligence retaining a fringe of instinct, biologists find a fundamental identity of nature between the animals and man. This general view is supported in a very marked degree by recent investigations of psychologists into the nature of the sub-conscious. These investigations tend to prove the basic similarity between the human and the higher animal sub-conscious. What is more, they show that animal instinct is but an inferior manifestation of a more highly-developed intuitive faculty which is the salient characteristic of the human unconscious as revealed by the psychoanalysts. When a cat removed from its own home climbs houses, swims rivers, threads its way through towns, and performs all manner of miraculous feats in the endeavour to return by the most direct route to the home which it has left, the instinct by which it acts is precisely the same as that which guides human beings in, for example, somnambulism. In somnambulism the human unconsciousness is released from the control of the conscious, and its manifestations have all the characteristics of blind certainty and directness which are the marks of animal instinct. Take any of the recent work which has been done on the unconscious; take, for instance, M. Geley's book, *From the Unconscious to the Conscious*, of which I should have liked to say more if it would not take us too far from our subject, and you will find it full of evidence for the continuity of instinct between animals and

man, a continuity which eludes superficial observation owing to the fact that the seat of instinct in man is in the unconscious and not in the conscious. This does not mean that instinct is not located in the unconscious in animals as well as in human beings, but with animals consciousness has less control, and the unconscious is therefore more directly manifested in action, although in the higher types the control generally increases until the area of action inspired directly by consciousness approximates to the human. The upshot of all this is that the allocation of instinct and intelligence as between animals and men is graded on a sort of sliding scale; the two faculties are, in fact, apportioned in different degrees at different levels, there being no clear-cut division such as Bergson postulates. M. Geley carries this point even further, and, entering the domain of supernormal psychology, shows fairly convincingly that the phenomena of what are called spiritualism, clairvoyance and telepathy are manifestations and products of the subconscious which are not different in character from the instinctive behaviour of animals. The whole question of the light thrown upon instinct by the researches of psychoanalysts and others is full of interest, though it would take us too far from our present discussion to pursue it further now. Perhaps we may go into it together on a future occasion.

MR. BANKS. There is nothing I should like better; the subject interests me profoundly, and seems capable of indefinite development. But tell me, who is this M. Geley of whom you speak. Is he a bitter antagonist of Bergson?

JOHN. Far from it. M. Geley is the Director of the International Metapsychical Institute at Paris. He is a Vitalist, and wages war on mechanism in all its forms. As an opponent of the classical theories of evolution, the theories of Darwin and Lamarck, he is of course a close ally of Bergson's, and pays an ungrudging tribute to the latter's unrivalled exposition of the failure of the ordinary mechanistic theories to account for the facts of evolution. Like Bergson, he postulates a creative force or urge continuously operative, which alone is able to account for the multifarious manifestations of developing life. But he quarrels with Bergson's Intuition whole-heartedly: I think he is right in this.

The conception of Intuition is vague, self-contradictory and inimical to careful philosophic study, encouraging short-cuts and happy guesses rather than painstaking investigation of evidence; most important of all, it does not square with the facts. Bergson's Intuition, you know, has been stigmatised, and not, I think, without justice, as merely a device to avoid hard thinking.

How Bergson's Conclusions Falsify his Philosophy.

One more point, and I have finished with Bergson's logic. I say one more point, but it is to my mind so formidable that, even if it stood alone, it would dispose once and for all of the Bergsonian system. It is a final point about intuition.

MR. BANKS. Have you not said enough about intuition? I shall be driven to think if you concentrate on it in this way that there is nothing else in Bergson's logic which is open to attack.

JOHN. There is nothing else, for Bergson's logic, in the ordinary sense of the word logic, does not exist. It is simply a statement of the relation between intellect and intuition, and the selection of the latter as the faculty for the comprehension of truth.

Now let me again put the question, What is that relation?

MR. BANKS. Intellect is the faculty which has been evolved for the purposes of life and action. In that capacity it presents us with a view of reality as a collection of solid objects extended in space. Intuition is the faculty whereby we become conscious of the real character of reality; through intuition we realise ourselves to be part of the one stream of life which is reality: we live reality, as it were, and in living it we are conscious of the nature of reality which is duration.

JOHN. Exactly! Now what would you call Bergson's philosophy? Is it a product of the intellect, or is it not?

MR. BANKS. Certainly it is, at any rate in method. Its inspiration is intuitional.

JOHN. That won't do, I am afraid. If Bergson's conception of the intellect as falsifying matter, or at any rate as presenting an unreal view of it for the purposes of action is

correct, it is clear that all reasoning about matter by the intellect can only have the effect of intensifying the error. The more we think and reason about matter instead of experiencing it, the further we drift from truth. But when Bergson constructs the elaborate edifice of his system, supports it by argument, inference and syllogism, explains and adorns it by the happy similes and metaphors whose ingenuity compels our admiration, when in fact he sets his reason to work to extend his system to cover ever more and more facts, he is using his intellect, and nothing but his intellect. And in proportion as it is a remarkably fine intellect, he has, on his own showing, achieved a greater falsification of reality than would be within the compass of smaller minds like yours or mine. If it be true that the intellect is not the faculty with which we arrive at truth, then Bergson's philosophy is false, for it is by intellect that he has constructed it. If his premises are correct, if intuition is for truth and intellect for life, then his conclusions which are intellectual are not. If, however, his conclusions are true, then by their very nature they convict the premises on which they are built of falsity. Just in so far as Bergson proves his point that intellect cannot know the real, his proof is invalidated by the very success of its demonstration. For is not proof intellectual?

Mr. Banks. This is all very neat and clever. It is a good example of the kind of logical quibbling about reality against which Bergson's philosophy warns us. But it is invalidated by a very important fact, and that is that the truth of Bergson's system is grasped, as I said before, by intuition, and not by intellect.

Dangers of Discrediting Intellect.

John. Then his arguments are clearly superfluous. Truth becomes a mystical possession not to be explained or communicated to others, and the whole Bergsonian philosophy becomes irrelevant. Why, in fact, write a philosophy at all when every argument you construct about the real must be at best beside the point, and at worst definitely misleading? You overlook the real character of the method Bergson pursues: it is intellectual throughout. Take any example at random.

We are warned against the common illusion of the intellect which, unable to grasp the real nature of change or movement, thinks of change as a succession of changing states. We are warned again against the illusion of the intellect which insists on regarding the absence of any particular order as disorder, instead of discerning what it necessarily is—the presence of another order. But how are these illusions detected ? How does Bergson detect them ? By his intellect. Reasoning with his intellect, he says, " These habits of the intellect are an illusion." Why, then, is the habit of the intellect by which he detects the illusion not an illusion too ? Why single out just those operations of the intellect which support the Bergsonian theory as trustworthy, and stigmatise all others as illusory ? You are involved here in an infinite regress. Once you begin to doubt the validity of intellect you have cut the ground from under your feet. Even your very doubts are intellectual, and therefore tainted with the same uncertainty as the intellectual propositions they doubt. You cannot affirm that intellectual affirmation does not give us truth : for your very affirmation claims for itself the truth which it denies to intellectual affirmation. These are old points : they were made by the Greeks. Yet Bergson in his distrust of intellectualism has inexplicably overlooked them.

Mr. Banks. I must confess that the last point had not before occurred to me ; nor at the moment do I see my way round it. It is indeed so obvious that one is tempted to wonder how it has been overlooked, if indeed it has been overlooked. Can you tell me whether it is an objection which is commonly brought against Bergson's philosophy ?

John. It has been brought forward by others, though I am not sure whether it has been made in quite this form against Bergson specifically. But it is an objection to which all philosophies that seek to discredit the sovereignty of reason seem to me to be exposed. It is an objection which applies in a measure to Pragmatism, to the Empiricism of William James, and to most forms of mysticism. Reason may be a poor instrument with which to conduct our search after truth. It is clumsy and roundabout and subject to error, but in my view it is the only instrument we possess. Try to discredit it and you will find you can only discredit

reason by means of reason itself, and the arguments on which your disparagement of reason and glorification of some other faculty, be it insight, intuition, instinct, feeling or what not, are based, are found themselves to be rational arguments. In proportion, therefore, as they prove their case against reason, they necessarily discredit themselves.

MR. BANKS. Perhaps it is for this very reason that Bergson displays such keen antipathy to what he calls the intellectualist tendencies of philosophers. But if your point is a sound one he has belittled them at his peril; for his whole position seems to be undermined by the most obvious logical reasoning. But I am not yet convinced that he can be disposed of as lightly as you seem to suggest.

JOHN. That, I must submit, is because, like so many, you are carried away by the charm of Bergson's matter, the lucidity of his reasoning and the ingenuity of his arguments. Bergson has a touch of real genius. There has been no philosopher since Plato who has such power to charm a man's reason by his speech. As you read him you are so carried away by the arguments, so dazzled by the luminousness of the method, that the voice of criticism is stilled within you. It is only later reflection that reveals, almost against the will, the inconsistencies and difficulties, some of which I have tried to point out.

MR. BANKS. You do not then deny all value to his work?

Summary of Bergson's Contributions.

JOHN. On the contrary, I think much of it extremely valuable. He has finally demonstrated the inadequacy of the materialist and mechanist theories, which regard the Universe somewhat after the nature of a vast machine which, once started, proceeds automatically by the mere interaction of its parts. Under the influence of Darwin, Huxley, Lamarck and their followers, these theories were predominant until a few years ago in the field of biology, just as their counterpart theories, which regarded the mind as a mere phosphorescent glow attendant upon the body were triumphant in psychology. Bergson has vindicated the uniqueness of mind in the Universe; he has established the necessity of a driving force

and shown the impossibility of explaining the phenomena of life and consciousness as the result of the interplay of material forces.

So far so good. Where, to my mind, he goes too far is in extending his Vitalist hypothesis to the world of matter, and explaining away matter in terms of life, or rather explaining both matter and consciousness as modifications of one homogeneous flow, which he calls Duration. The establishment of the uniqueness and independence of life is not a necessary preliminary to the destruction of the uniqueness and independence of matter.

Personally, I am unable to accept Monism, or the doctrine that there is only one thing in the Universe, in any of its forms, whether you identify this one thing with mind or life or duration or matter. The distinction between life and matter seems to me fundamental and to involve what for the moment I shall be content to call a fundamental dualism. But that does not mean that I would not define life much as Bergson defines it, regarding it, however, as a unique principle, a kind of living force appearing in a dead world of matter which is hostile to it. Read Schopenhauer, Von Hartmann, or Bernard Shaw for this theory of the Life Force, as Shaw calls it.

Mr. Banks. I would prefer to hear of it from yourself, so that I can question you on points that seem obscure. There is much to be gained by verbal discussion.

John. Very well, then; we will fix another time for a discussion of the philosophy of the Life Force.

CHAPTER II

THE UNCONSCIOUS AND THE THEORY OF THE LIFE FORCE

Introduction.

JOHN. I am glad to see you again, Mr. Banks. Have you thought over our talk about Bergson? I have no doubt that you have found on reflection much to dissatisfy you in what I said, and have returned with a quiverful of arguments in his defence.

MR. BANKS. To be frank, I am afraid I have not given to your criticisms the reflection they deserved. As a matter of fact, my mind has been occupied with different subjects.

JOHN. Perhaps, then, you have come for that discussion of the Life Force, which, as you may remember, we promised ourselves the last time you were here.

MR. BANKS. Yes, indeed. I should like to hear about that; but, as a matter of fact, that is not what I came for. I want to hear your views on a subject that has interested me profoundly, that to my mind holds the key to all the puzzles that have baffled students of human consciousness, that is fraught with infinite possibilities for good or ill, and convicts most psychology and philosophy of being obsolete nonsense.

JOHN. Good Lord! What in the name of goodness can this thing be?

MR. BANKS. I refer to psychoanalysis.

JOHN. Of course; how stupid of me! That's all the go just now, I understand. Have you yourself been subjected to the treatment?

MR. BANKS. No. But my wife's sister has, and with the most gratifying results. It rather shocked her at first to find out what her unconscious was like; but now she is rather proud of it: looks upon herself as quite a devil of a

fellow, so to speak. It has been a real and gratifying revelation to her of latent capacity, and the treatment has done her a world of good: she sleeps better, her nerves are stronger, and her temper improved out of all knowledge. She is quite tolerable to live with now.

JOHN. Your wife's sister, I take it, is unmarried?

MR. BANKS. Yes.

JOHN. She would be! Psychoanalysis is rivalling religion in its vogue among women, especially unmarried women. Like God, it only gets the women men don't want: like religion, it invests their emotional states with immense importance, and so ministers to a self-respect impaired by the neglect of the other sex. Imagination has always been a substitute for action, but what was the good of leading in imagination the life you would have liked to lead in action, if the censor did not allow the knowledge of it to penetrate into consciousness? But now, when our imaginations have perforce to do duty for our sensations, psychoanalysis can at least give us the pleasure of knowing it; and though our knowledge reveals something surprisingly like a dustbin for sexual refuse, we are all secretly proud of being gay dogs at heart, even if that romantic organ has to be rationalised away under the scientific name of the unconscious.

MR. BANKS. You are pleased to be satirical. But this is a subject on which I feel deeply, and I must ask you not to be flippant.

JOHN. I am sorry to appear flippant, but some of it is such awful nonsense; eroticism dashed with science masquerading as psychology, and served up in the language of divine flapdoodle.

MR. BANKS. You can't expect me to take such a verdict seriously, nor can I believe that you as a philosopher would have no words for a subject of such immense importance but those of vulgar abuse. If this is your considered opinion, I must at least ask you to be good enough to let me know your reasons for it.

Criticism of Psychoanalysis.

JOHN. By all means. But I would not have you take my preceding remarks too seriously. There is much that is

of value in psychoanalysis. Its masters, Freud and Jung, are great men. It is only the extravagances of some of their followers, who treat the subject as if it were sacred, conceiving of Freud as a god and themselves as his high priests, that arouse the laughter of the ribald. Once we are freed from the necessity of accepting every word of Freud as though it were inspired, we shall find much that is both new and valuable and shall be duly grateful for it. And as the subject is not in its wider bearing so far removed from that which I had in mind to discuss with you, we may perhaps extend our treatment of it to include a brief consideration of the Life Force which I feel to be necessary to complete our survey of Bergson.

MR. BANKS. I am anxious to hear what you will say on that subject, and shall certainly not object if you can tack it on to psychoanalysis.

JOHN. There is one more preliminary observation I want to make, and I think it desirable that I should do so in self-protection, seeing how numerous are the converts to psychoanalysis and how formidable the reputation it has made for itself. I understand and am ready to believe that the psychoanalytic method has wrought wonderful cures in the case of disorders impervious to any other method. I believe it has even greater successes before it, and has done and will do in the world a power of good. I do not quarrel with its assumption of the truth of unproved hypotheses for the purposes of experiment, this being, as I conceive, the proper scientific method, nor do I regard it as any defect in it as a science that it is unable to give a coherent account of the make-up of the human ego. No criticism of mine therefore can touch psychoanalysis on its proper ground as a special science. It is only when it assumes the guise of a theory of knowledge and imposes itself upon us as a convincing and consistent account of the whole field of human psychology, both known and unknown, that it goes beyond its proper sphere and lays itself open to attack. It is only therefore as a so-called philosophy of human consciousness and unconsciousness that I wish to consider and to criticise it.

In the first place I should like to draw your attention to the conception of the unconscious itself.

This conception of the unconscious occupies, I think you will admit, the place of honour in psychoanalysis ; the unconscious is the keystone of the whole edifice ; and its main characteristic, the characteristic that distinguishes it from the conscious, is that we don't know what is going on in it : we don't, in fact, know it at all.

Mr. Banks. Yes, but we know all sorts of things about it, or at any rate we can find them out.

John. Not so fast ! We are coming to that in a moment. The first thing I want to establish is that the real, inner essence of the unconscious, the unconscious, that is to say, in so far as it is really unconscious and not a kind of dim-lit consciousness, is unknown. Freud himself says so ; these are, in fact, so far as I can remember, his exact words : " The inner nature of the unconscious is just as unknown to us as the reality of the external world."

Now let us come to your point. Having established ignorance of the unconscious as a sort of basic axiom, the psychoanalyst then goes on to enumerate quite a number of things that he does know about it. He knows, for example, that it conditions and causes what happens in the conscious ; we are told that every thing that appears in the conscious has its preliminary stage in the unconscious ; he knows, too, that it is predominantly sexual ; he tells us, for instance, that all the peculiar trends of the unconscious are " sexual in origin."

Surely there is a fundamental contradiction here. If it is true that we do not know the unconscious, we cannot know anything about it ; we cannot know, for instance, that it is sexual, that it is the cause of what appears in the conscious, or even that it exists. You cannot have the unconscious both ways : you cannot say first, " Its inner nature is unknown to us," and second, " We know it to be a characteristic of its inner nature to manifest itself in various ways in the conscious."

Mr. Banks. Surely you are making difficulties for yourself here. I admit that we do not know the unconscious directly, but we do know it indirectly through the manifestations in consciousness which we recognise as having their origin in the unconscious.

John. But you cannot *recognise* these manifestations as

proceeding from the unconscious, unless you are directly acquainted with the unconscious to begin with, so that, in virtue of your previous acquaintance, you can recognise manifestations from the unconscious as being like what you already know. All recognition involves a process of identification; but you cannot identify A as being like B or as being a part of B unless you first know B in order to make out the identification. Thus the exclamation, "Hullo! That comes from the unconscious!" presupposes a direct knowledge of the unconscious to begin with. You can't, in fact, recognise a thing as coming from this or that or as being like this or that unless you know what this or that is like first; and in the case of the unconscious you don't. What you do know are manifestations that appear in the conscious; but these manifestations, from the very fact that they appear in the conscious, cannot at the same time as they appear, that is at the time when you know them, be still in the unconscious; nor does the knowledge of them confer knowledge of the unconscious, but always knowledge of something in the conscious.

You can *say*, of couse, that these manifestations originate in the unconscious, but that is merely another way of saying you believe something unknown in the unconscious to be the cause of certain known phenomena in the conscious. Now, if you are in the habit of supplying the place of knowledge by converting your conjectures into dogmas, you can assert, of course, that this belief proves that there is an unconscious: if you are not, you must be content to regard it as merely a belief which will seem to you to be probable and intelligent just in so far as you hold independently that there is an unconscious, but it is certainly not knowledge, and cannot be used to prove or even to support the existence of the unconscious.

Mr. Banks. Why not, if the belief is well grounded?

John. Because a belief whose probability depends on the assumption that there is an unconscious to make it probable cannot itself be adduced in support of that assumption.

Mr. Banks. Do I understand you then to deny the existence of the unconscious?

John. Not at all. What I am asserting is that it is not logically possible either to assert or to deny it, at any rate

as the psychoanalysts conceive it. You cannot say, first, that you never know a thing, and then that you know that it exists ; but you may of course believe it exists.

Let me put the point briefly in the shape of a formula :

You have three things : first, the knowing self, a mind, which we will call (A). There are, of course, all sorts of difficulties about the assumption of a bare act of consciousness which is independent of and apart from the content of the conscious which it knows, but we will pass them by.

MR. BANKS. What sort of difficulties ?

JOHN. Oh, that is a long story. Read Bertrand Russell, or the Behaviourists, or the New Materialists. For them there is no conscious, knowing ego : in fact, there is neither conscious nor ego ; but that enquiry would take us a long way from psychoanalysis. As I was saying, then, we have the knowing mind (A), the consciousness which it knows, which we will call (B), and the unconscious which it does not know, but which it assumes to be the cause of the conscious which it does know ; this unconscious we will call (C).

Now if (A) always and on all occasions knows only (B) and never (C), it cannot know either that (C) exists or that it is the cause of (B). It can observe certain phenomena in (B) which it may call manifestations of (C), but unless it knows (C) directly it cannot, in fact, know whether these phenomena are manifestations of (C) or not. Do you see the point now ?

MR. BANKS. I think so, but it is very abstract and logical. Do you think it of great importance ?

JOHN. Only in so far as psychoanalysis claims to present us with a reasoned psychology. Personally, I think there is every reason to suppose that the unconscious exists ; all I want to do is to point out that you cannot glibly assume it as the psychoanalysts do. However, I will return to the unconscious later.

Now let us consider one or two other features in this picture of our psychical interior which the psychoanalysts have painted for us.

Take some of his *bêtes noires*. One, of course, is the censor ; another is civilisation. But that I may not misrepre-

sent the theories we are discussing, perhaps you, as a person who holds them, will be good enough just to run over the ordinary view of the censor.

MR. BANKS. I will do my best, but I am afraid it will be rather a crude affair.

JOHN. You need not elaborate. It will be sufficient if you say enough to show that we mean the same things when we talk of the censor, civilisation, taboos, and the rest.

MR. BANKS. The censor has been evolved by civilisation as the jailer in the individual of those instincts, impulses and feelings whose unfettered expression would prove dangerous to civilisation. The influence of civilisation acting upon us through our environment, and chiefly embodied in public opinion, erects a series of taboos which assert categorically that certain feelings are wrong, certain impulses disreputable; society intimates, therefore, that no self-respecting person would harbour them. The result is that we don't harbour them, at any rate consciously. We may harbour them unconsciously, but it is the business of the censor not to let us know it by keeping them out of consciousness. In order to effect this the censor acts as a kind of filter, only letting through from the unconscious into the conscious those emotions, thoughts and impulses which are acceptable to civilisation. By this means the individual is saved the discomfort attendant upon a true knowledge of his primitive, natural self, and escapes the importunities of his conscience, eager to chastise him for harbouring thoughts which offend against society's taboos.

JOHN. Very concisely put. And then, of course, there is sublimation.

MR. BANKS. Of course! The censor is not only a filter but a moral purifier. It is not true to say that it suppresses all disreputable instincts. It lets some of them through at the cost of changing them in mid-passage as it were. The change is always a highly respectable one, so that a sexual desire for one's own mother is transformed by the censor into a pious wish to collect photographs of her from her babyhood upwards. And it is only under this guise that such a sexual desire appears in consciousness.

JOHN. Now the psychoanalysts deplore, do they not,

this damming up of the stream of impulses and their transformation by the censor, in the interests of propriety, into a sort of nonconformist edition of the original ?

Mr. Banks. Yes, certainly ! By turning the conscious into a kind of Sunday school, and refusing admission to all candidates who do not wear uniform dress, behave themselves in a respectable manner, and conform to the accepted proprieties, the censor starves, strangles and distorts the most precious manifestations of the self. It dams up the natural stream of impulses which, driven underground, overflow into a kind of swamp. This swamp is the complex which the analyst seeks to resolve by dragging up into consciousness the impulses and thoughts which have been suppressed, and thus, if I may complete the metaphor, drawing off the accumulation below, which, like most stagnant water, grows fœtid through need of an outlet.

John. You grow quite poetical, Mr. Banks ! And the complexes, when unresolved, produce in turn the neuroses, the bad dreams, the morbid states, the obsessions and the hallucinations which first drive the patient to have recourse to the analyst. Is not that so ?

Mr. Banks. It is. And the analyst, by setting free the suppressed impulses, by breaking through the repressive barrier of the censor, restores the self to free development. The result is to increase both happiness and efficiency. It is repression that is bad, repression dictated by convention and taboos in the interests of so-called civilisation. Repression, in fact, is the constant enemy of the analyst whenever and wherever it is found.

John. I think that is a very fair account of the general theory. Now I want to go back a moment to what we said about the unconscious. Its all-pervading character was, you will remember, one of the things much insisted on : in it was to be found the germ of everything that subsequently appeared in the conscious. Is that not so ?

Mr. Banks. Yes, that is right.

John. In the unconscious, therefore, is to be found the preliminary source of the censor and those repressive influences you have just been describing, for these certainly appear in consciousness ?

MR. BANKS. I suppose so.

JOHN. Then any attempt to interfere with or to suppress the censor, and the repressive influences of our prudish and conventional consciousness, would, in effect, be a repression of something which owes its origin to the all-pervading unconscious. If the suppression of the unconscious is wrong, and its thwarting by the censor when it tries to get through into consciousness is regrettable, it follows that any attempt to thwart the censor, or to suspend or suppress his activities, would itself constitute a repression of the unconscious of the kind we have been deploring. Or are we to allow all the manifestations of the unconscious in the conscious to have free play, except only those manifestations which express themselves in the censor and in inhibitory impulses generally? If so, what of the complexes that will arise from the suppression of our inhibitions?

MR. BANKS. Surely these questions are a little academic. It is only to our natural impulses that we are bidden to give free play, not to artificial elements such as inhibitions.

JOHN. But in what sense are these elements artificial? If civilisation and the taboos which civilisation engenders do not spring from certain promptings and impulses in human nature, whence come they? If, in fact, civilisation is not natural in the sense that it is a natural development of human beings when gathered together in society, how does it arise? Is there any sense in calling anything made by man to meet the needs of his nature artificial? Psychoanalysts make an unfair discrimination against the gregarious instincts that have produced civilisation with its necessary taboos and restraints. They speak as though it were something artificial which has been forcibly imposed upon our other instincts, with lamentable results to the individual as a whole, our other instincts, especially if they happen to be sexual or selfish, being regarded as natural in some sense in which civilisation is not natural.

But if in the unconscious is to be found the origin of everything, it contains the origin of civilisation and taboos, which should not therefore be suppressed in the interests of our sex and selfishness, on the ground that sex and selfishness are natural while civilisation is not. What you have, in fact

is the conflict between two equally deep-seated natural impulses : the impulse that makes for society and the purely self-regarding impulse. Admitting that the conflict is regrettable, it is idle to express your regret for the harm done by the victory of the one set of impulses by simply transferring it to the other. Yet this is what the cry, " Suppress the censor and his inhibitions in the interests of the unconscious," really means.

MR. BANKS. I admit your point in theory ; but it seems to me to have little practical importance. In practice the analyst scarcely ever, if at all, discovers complexes caused by the repression of the inhibitory elements in our nature. What he does find is repression of the other elements, especially sexual elements, owing to the complete despotism exercised by the censor.

JOHN. But tell me, how does he know the real cause of any complex in the patient ?

MR. BANKS. By interpreting the patient's dreams, by observing his reactions to certain words, and by other processes, free association, suggestion, and so on, with which I expect you are as familiar as I am.

JOHN. And in interpreting these dreams, in observing these reactions, and in collecting all the other evidence upon which he bases his diagnosis of the patient's complexes, does it not ever happen that the analyst is himself the victim of delusion, a delusion based upon the existence of complexes of his own, which express themselves in a persistent refusal on the part of *his* censor to allow the appearance in his own consciousness of any interpretation of the patient's condition unpleasant to himself personally ?

MR. BANKS. I suppose that is possible, but it is most unlikely. Every accredited psychoanalytic operator is himself subjected to a rigorous examination by other analysts, with a view to the resolving of any complexes of his own before he may aspire to examine and interpret the psyche of others.

JOHN. Yes, but consider a moment how numerous and subtle are the devices of the censor for distorting and suppressing the real content of the unconscious. There is symbolism, whereby the desire to caress a woman's breast

is represented, for example, as the love of climbing of mountains: displacement, whereby love for one person is represented as love for an entirely different person: sublimation, or the moral purification of disreputable elements in the unconscious: and repression pure and simple.

Any or all of these processes may, for example, affect a patient's description of one of his own dreams, so that the analyst must in interpretation penetrate through to the dream as it was before these distorting processes got to work. In the ordinary psychoanalitic phraseology, the manifest content of the dream which appears in consciousness is a distorted version of the latent content: it is the business of the analyst to strip away the distortion and reveal the latent content.

MR. BANKS. Yes, that is his function, and I do not see why he should not perform it correctly. In the majority of cases the evidence shows that he does perform it correctly.

JOHN. Possibly. But how is he to tell? It is always possible that precisely those influences which distort the patient's description of his dream may also be at work upon the analyst's interpretation of the description, so that instead of revealing the latent content he is merely overlaying the first distortion of the manifest content with a second distortion of his own. Why, in fact, are we to assume the proneness of all human beings as potential patients to the habits of displacement, symbolism, repression, and the other devices of the censor, and then to claim a special exemption from these influences and habits for the analyst?

MR. BANKS. But the analyst has not the same special interest as the patient in repressing the content of the unconscious. His interests are all the other way.

JOHN. Yes, but they are nevertheless special interests. His interests prompt him, first, to find some interpretation of the dream, and, secondly, to find an interpretation generally in accord with the psychoanalytic conception of the unconscious—that is to say an interpretation of a predominantly sexual character. The importance of the analyst's own special interest is illustrated by the significant frequency with which patients' dreams of the most diverse types are claimed by analysts to be susceptible to one particular interpretation.

It is, you must confess, rather startling to find how often in the works of writers on psychoanalysis, especially in the works of lady analysts, a dream of which the manifest content appears in the narrative of the patient to be spiritual affection for A, is shown by the analyst to be a distortion of a latent content which is sexual love for B, B being shown on further analysis to be the analyst herself. I leave you to infer how far the significant frequency of this particular interpretation indicates the need for psychoanalysis on the part of the operator, especially when the latter is a lady and unmarried.

MR. BANKS. Of course what you say is possible in some cases, but I am convinced that they are rare ones.

JOHN. I am inclined to agree, but the point is that the analyst can never tell whether these distorting influences are at work in himself or not. We are told that the censor is incredibly subtle in his devices for distorting the unconscious. May not the subtlest of his devices be just this, that he produces in operators the impression that they are interpreting without bias on an impartial examination of the evidence, when they are, in point of fact, moulding their interpretation along lines convenient or gratifying to themselves;—the impression, in short, that he is quiescent when in reality he is most active? And how can the operator detect his activity? How indeed, when all the apparent evidence of the censor's quiescence and his own impartiality may be just so much clever scene-setting of the mental stage by the censor.

All psychoanalytic interpretations are tainted with this doubt—the doubt lest they be in part distorted products of the unconscious of the analyst, instead of being, what they purport to be, a light thrown on the unconscious of the patient. And this doubt, from the nature of the case, can never be removed.

MR. BANKS. Well, I must once again admit the logical validity of your argument, but I can do that while doubting its practical application. It seems to me that, though what you suggest always may in theory happen, in practice it happens to a negligible extent.

JOHN. What you say is again probable. But you must remember that where not a single one of the methods of the psychoanalyst is free from this suspicion, the result is to

undermine one's confidence in the efficacy of the whole business. I have spoken of the interpretation of dreams; but take any other psychoanalytic process you please, and you will find the same difficulty to exist. Take, for instance, the question of free association. But you are, I see, getting so suspicious of my reasoning, that perhaps it would be better if you would yourself briefly outline what you take to be meant by free association. Then, at least, you will not be able to charge me with dressing up my material in such a way as to facilitate the logical conjuring tricks which I know you think I play with it.

MR. BANKS. Very well! Free association, I take it, is the name given to the process by which the patient is urged to abrogate all conscious control of his mind, and then to relate to the analyst in the order of their appearance all the thoughts, feelings, reflections and images which travel through it. If the processes of selection, suppression and distortion are kept in abeyance, the analyst obtains by means of these thoughts and images a glimpse of the patient's unconscious.

JOHN. The trustworthiness of that glimpse depends, of course, upon the association being really free, upon the patient not keeping back anything which occurs to him.

MR. BANKS. Of course, that is essential.

JOHN. But how is the patient to know whether the association is free or not. How is he to tell whether the thoughts, images, and so on which appear, instead of being freely suggested by the unconscious, are not fabricated by the censor, with the deliberate intention of covering up the unconscious and preventing its real nature from being seen ?

MR. BANKS. Oh! But the analyst will be able to recognise the distorting influences when they appear. If the patient is consciously or unconsciously suppressing some association, the fact will be readily observed. The analyst is always on his guard in case the censor should be up to his usual tricks.

JOHN. But how can he detect them unless he knows what to look for to begin with ? It is clear that he can only recognise bona fide manifestations of the unconscious if he possesses first of all a knowledge of the unconscious; it is only in virtue of that knowledge that he can detect the dis-

tortions and suppressions of the censor. But it is on free association that he is relying to get that knowledge: it is, in fact, just because he has not got it to begin with that he resorts to the method of free association. Now you cannot obtain accurate knowledge of a thing by methods which are only valid on the assumption that you have the knowledge to begin with.

The method of free association appears, then, to be subject to the same difficulty as the interpretation of dreams, and indeed any other of the methods pursued by psychoanalysts. The trouble is that you can never tell whether the evidence on which you base your knowledge of the patient's unconscious has not been faked by the censor, the most irritating and baffling complication being that all the evidence which may exist in favour of its not being faked may, on a deeper view, be just so much the more, and the more subtle evidence that it is.

These are some of the logical difficulties of which ordinary psychoanalytical theory does not seem to me to take adequate account, and they are all of a basic character, relating, as they do, to the fundamental postulates upon which psychoanalytic knowledge and method are based. I have devoted myself mainly to these fundamental matters because it hardly seems worth our while to waste powder and shot upon some of the more palpably absurd methods of these so-called scientists.

Mr. Banks. As, for instance?

John. As for instance the obvious retort which would occur to the ordinary practitioner, that these very criticisms of mine were evidence of a suspicious hostility to psychoanalysis; suspicious because it could not but be sprung from repressed complexes and unresolved neuroses on my own part, which irresistibly demand my immediate subjection to psychoanalytic treatment. The implication is, of course, that opposition to psychoanalysis can never be rational or wholehearted, but must be dictated by some sinister fear prompted by the critic's censor, a fear based on a disinclination to have his own unconscious revealed by analytic methods. An unsurpassable method of meeting criticism this! You turn the tables on your critic by proving that his very wish to criticise springs from his crying need of that which he criti-

cises. Yet to this, and to any other convenient absurdity, the psychoanalyst may always have resort. When your theory is based on the assumption of the existence of something which is by hypothesis unknown, you can always assert precisely what you please about it without fear of contradiction. Thus in argument you can always have it both ways, thereby arriving at any conclusion you like. If necessary and convenient, you can base the opposite conclusions on the same premises, as, for instance, the two conclusions, first, that hate of a father is a sublimation of an unconscious primitive impulse of sexual love for a father, or, in other words, incest, and second, that ordinary affection for a father is the sublimated form of precisely the same primitive impulse. (You have heard, I doubt not, of the famous Œdipus complex ?)

What, in the name of clear thinking, are we to make of a theory which asserts that sublimation may produce in the conscious either the exact reverse of what you want in the unconscious, or precisely the same thing in a more presentable form, with the convenient corollary that no possible conscious phenomenon can ever be incompatible with the theory of the unconscious ?

These, of course, are some of the things which give the enemy cause to blaspheme. And yet I for one would be reluctant to number myself among the enemy.

Mr. Banks. That is an admission which appears as surprising as it is generous, coming on top of your rather unsympathetic criticism.

John. There is no generosity about it, I assure you. Reflect who the enemy are, and consider whether any man who prides himself on his accessibility to new ideas would care to enrol himself in their ranks. A new science inevitably meets with opposition from the old ones it supersedes. There is a vested interest in all knowledge, and the appearance of new ideas places the upholders of that vested interest under the necessity either of accepting them and thereby re-orientating their philosophy, a process which involves time, trouble and the sacrifice of cherished views, or of producing reasons for their rejection. As the upholders of vested knowledge are almost invariably old men, they usually adopt the latter

course on principle, except when they grow too old to understand even the little of what is new which is necessary for its rebuttal, in which case they blandly and tacitly ignore it. This is what has largely happened in the case of psychoanalysis. Our university professors just don't lecture about it. But apart from this natural opposition on the part of the old to what threatens to supersede them, psychoanalysis raises up a host of enemies both among the nerve specialists, whose income it promises to undermine, and among the vulgar upon whose moral corns it treads. Few of us really like to be told that our innermost essence is a weltering mass of unbridled, sexual license. It is the bitterness of this opposition which has provoked supporters of psychoanalysis into an attitude proportionately dogmatic and extreme. With apostolic zeal they proffer their ready-made key which is to unlock all the secret chambers of the mind, and, with the bludgeon of the unconscious in their hand, convict of disreputable, repressed complexes all who venture to dispute their claim to omniscience.

This is the more unfortunate since the theory contains elements of real value, which it possesses in common with the general trend of all that appears to me of special significance in modern thought. It has, I think, helped finally to disprove the old mechanist and parallelist theories which I now want to consider.

Mr. Banks. You mean that, even granting the validity of your criticisms, there are things in psychoanalysis which they fail to touch.

John. That is so; and in thinking over these objections that I have tried to lay before you, it is important that you should realise what it is exactly that they discredit, in so far as they appear to you sufficiently valid to discredit anything. They are valid, not against the practical methods and results achieved by the psychoanalysts which they could not in any event impugn, but only against the alleged structure of the human mind and personality with which the psychoanalysts have presented us. They are valid not against psychoanalysis as a branch of physiology or even of psychology, but against psychoanalysis as a philosophy: not against the unconscious as such, but against the particular

picture of it and of its relations to the conscious painted for us by the psychoanalysts.

MR. BANKS. You mean that you are now prepared to accept the unconscious, although you sought a little while ago to prove that it was logically non-existent.

JOHN. Certainly I am prepared to accept it. I only tried to show that you could not by logic demonstrate its existence if it were conceived on the lines of psychoanalysis. But I believe that you can, as a matter of fact, demonstrate it in a number of other ways, although the resulting conception is a very different affair from the average psychoanalyst's unconscious. And I think we may take this question of the unconscious, which forms, as it were, a link between our two enquiries, as a starting point for our second enquiry.

MR. BANKS. You mean that we can use it as a jumping-off point, as it were, for our discussion of the Life Force.

JOHN. Scarcely that, for we have a little preliminary ground to cover before we come back to the unconscious, though when we do come back to it, it will land us right into the middle of our discussion of the Life Force.

MR. BANKS. What is this preliminary ground that we must first traverse ?

The Classical Conceptions of Evolution.

JOHN. I want to take a brief glance at biology, and in considering the orthodox theories of evolution to show in what respect they call, by their failure to account for the facts, for a new conception of the Universe in which the unconscious will play a necessary and significant part.

MR. BANKS. We are going to take a long journey, it seems.

JOHN. Yes, we shall traverse a considerable tract of country ; but don't be alarmed, we shall move quickly. Now, in the first place, do you know what the ordinary, classical theories of evolution are ?

MR. BANKS. The theories of Darwin and Huxley, I suppose.

JOHN. Well, and what are they ? What do they assert ?

MR. BANKS. Something to the effect that, as a result of

the operations of natural selection, those species survived which were most fitted to their environment.

JOHN. And how were new species produced?

MR. BANKS. Because they were suited to their environment, or rather those were produced and ultimately survived which were so suited.

JOHN. But how could they be suited before they existed? Or did some latent intuition occur *in vacuo* and whisper in the ear of a non-existent species, "If you suddenly appear with such-and-such characteristics developed, you will find an environment suitable to you"?

MR. BANKS. Perhaps it was just chance that produced them, although Bergson would not like that.

JOHN. Come, we must be more precise than that. There are two classical conceptions of evolution. The first is Darwin's, the second Lamarck's. Darwin held roughly that variations in species occur purely fortuitously, and fortuitous developments which happened to be adapted to their environment, and therefore to have survival value, did survive, while others died out. The origin of the whole process, as you observe, is a sheer fluke, expressed by saying "Fortuitous variations occur."

Lamarck held that adaptation to environment was the only factor of importance, and that the influence of the environment could in itself account for the development of new species that were suited to it. Thus, if you were a beast living in the Sahara, and if the Sahara, owing to some atmospheric revolution, suddenly metamorphosed its climate and became subject to the heaviest rainfall on the globe, you might, if you were a good Lamarckian, expect to see your offspring born with the rudiments of umbrellas.

MR. BANKS. You mean that the influence of the rain would in itself cause the development of creatures with characteristics suitable to a rainy climate.

JOHN. That is the theory. Now, these two theories, Darwin's and Lamarck's, have been developed and combined in all sorts of ways; but both the theories, and the combinations of them and the developments from them, have this important feature in common; they are all, with the possible exception of what is called neo-Lamarckianism,

mechanistic. I mean by the word "mechanistic" that they conceive of the Universe as if it were a kind of gigantic clock: wind the clock up and it functions thereafter by the automatic interaction of its parts, each one of which determines the activity of the others and is itself determined by them.

Now the ordinary evolutionist cannot explain to you how the clock came to be wound up; but that omission in itself is no objection to his general view. To ask him to explain this would be tantamount to demanding an explanation of the origin of the Universe itself, of how it came to exist and why, a problem which philosophers and scientists of all schools can only leave on one side as an insoluble mystery. If you believe that everything proceeds as the result of the law of cause and effect, it is obviously absurd to ask what is the first cause. But once the initial kick that set the Universe going be assumed, it can and does proceed for the rest of time, on the mechanist view, without the interposition of any extraneous force, agency, god, or creative power of any kind, just as a clock once wound up proceeds to work without the need of any assistance from outside. The advantage of this view is obvious: given the one great mystery of the existence of the Universe, it involves, or is alleged to involve, no unexplained factor at any stage to account for the evolution of the Universe to its present stage of development. The hypothesis therefore has the advantage of complying with the scientific demand for economy of mystery; whereas the Vitalist hypothesis, the view of Bergson, for instance, which assumes the existence and constant operation of a creative force, which is independent of and superior to matter, and which requires that a fresh act of inexplicable creation should take place every time we think or act, involves the constant interposition of the mysterious, the mysterious being, on the mechanist hypothesis, any phenomenon which cannot be interpreted as the result of the laws which govern the workings of matter.

The Parallelist Hypothesis.

The mechanist conception of evolution as the functioning of an automatic machine has its counterpart and corollary in the so-called parallelist hypothesis in psychology.

If mind or spirit has no necessary part to play in the evolution of the world, it is not to be expected that we shall find it of supreme importance in the constitution of the individual. We shall not regard it as the key to his personality, nor, like the Vitalists, as the essence of his being. As for the body we shall refuse to assign to it the unimportant position of a mere corporeal integument for the spirit, a temporary and incidental resting-place, a sort of inn in which the soul may pass a brief space on its unresting march to some ultimate and ideal goal. We shall deny the probability of the survival of the individual or of the individual's soul after death, and the soul itself we shall regard as a mere metaphysical or mystical figment, the product of man's incorrigible hope in the indefinite prolongation of his own personality, a hope born of human vanity and fear of extinction, but owning no foundation in the data supplied by an impartial and scientific investigation of the facts of human physiology and psychology.

Mr. Banks. What, then, is mind or spirit on this view? How explain it? for we have no alternative but to admit its existence, at any rate in the present.

John. Mind is most plausibly explained on this view by one of the forms of the theory to which I have referred above as Parallelism. It is thought that matter, by a continual process of refinement and purification, has taken a form so tenuous and etiolated that it almost ceases to possess the material characteristics of weight, density, shape, colour and the rest, and becoming conscious of itself can even delude itself into the belief that it is not matter at all, but something other than matter. It calls itself, in fact, mind. But this supposed difference from matter is an illusion. What we have to deal with is first of all the brain, which is, of course, obviously material, a collection of nerves, grey matter and so forth, and secondly this alleged entity which is called mind, but is really only a form of matter. This so-called mind is like a mist attendant on the brain, part of it and sprung from it, yet compounded of matter of a different order, like the halo round the head of a saint, or, if I may use a more accurate though sordid metaphor, like the phosphorescent glow that surrounds a decayed lobster.

Two important points are involved in this conception

First, the mind is entirely dependent on the brain, and therefore upon the rest of the body, for its existence: destroy the body and you destroy the mind; the halo, in other words, goes out. Secondly, every modification in the mind is the counterpart of some modification in the brain, that is, of some modification in the body: everything that happens in the mind, every mental occurrence, is preceded and conditioned by something that first happens in the body, and every thought that occurs to us, instead of being a new thing in the world, a new creation as it were, is simply the result of some disturbance in the nerve centres. The material therefore precedes, moulds, conditions, governs, causes—use any word you like to denote precedence and dominance—the mental.

And this, of course, is in accord with the general theory of mechanism which I have just outlined. If the world works mechanically, so does the human being. Mind is not creative: it is an offshoot of matter, and subject like matter to the laws of cause and effect. It follows that free will is a delusion. Every apparent act of choice, every so-called spontaneous feeling or original thought, is the automatic result of some modification in the intertidal scum out of which life is first supposed to have arisen millions of years ago.

Mr. Banks. Do I understand that you accept this view?

Tough- and Tender-minded Attitudes.

John. I accepted it, or at any rate I identified myself with the spirit of it until recently. I held that one's views on these matters, where positive proof one way or the other was out of the question, were mainly determined by one's temperament, and I accepted William James' rough definition of temperaments into tough and tender.

Tough-minded people regard the conscious as a mere incidental phenomenon, a sort of alien, an outside and temporary passenger in an environment fundamentally hostile or indifferent, a passenger, moreover, who is travelling on a futile journey that has no goal and knows no purpose; a journey which, for all the difference it makes to the Universe at large, might never have been begun. Life is to them a mere eddy in the primeval slime, a tiny glow, as Wells puts it, in the vast

immensities of space and time, which will one day flicker and go out with as little fuss and significance as heralded its appearance. Consciousness, in so far as it can be regarded as being in any way different from matter, is at best its servant, bounded and confined by its environment, and tied hand and foot by the inexorable law of cause and effect.

To tender-minded people such a view is intolerable. They hold that the intimate, the human and the spiritual must in some fundamental way underlie and outlast the material and brutal, and instead of thinking of matter as moulding spirit, they hope and believe that spirit will come to mould matter, even if it does not do so now.

Now I held, as I have said, that one's choice between these two fundamental attitudes to the Universe, and one's view of the position of spirit within the Universe, was a matter of temperament, and I believed my own temperament to be tough. I inclined naturally to the mechanist view. I still believe my temperament to be tough, but I hope it is not impervious to evidence; and the new evidence brought to our notice by psychical research, psychoanalysis, and the theory of the unconscious, seems to be to make the old mechanist view of evolution and the parallelist view of psychology no longer tenable.

It is to this evidence I now want to turn.

It is a curious thing that the sort of view I want to suggest borrows each of its two leading features from one of the two theories that we have discussed, and which for my part I have somewhat adversely criticised.

I have found fault with Bergson and quarrelled with psychoanalysis, but I now want to borrow from Bergson his notion of a creative force behind evolution, and from psychoanalysis the notion of the unconscious.

Mr. Banks. Isn't that rather cavalier treatment on your part? You first of all plunder these theories of all you think worth having, and then take the credit for it as if it were your own.

John. I admit taking the plunder, but not the credit. In fact, I am just going to give the greater part of the credit to that M. Geley, Director of the International Metapsychical

Institute at Paris, of whom I spoke last time we met, and whose general view I propose to lay before you. With much of what he says I entirely agree. Where I think Geley is wrong I shall make a point of saying, "Here I begin to disagree with M. Geley," and shall substitute certain ideas of my own. If it turns out in the end that I am right in those matters in which I think him wrong, then I shall be glad enough to take the credit for that.

MR. BANKS. Very well! But who is this M. Geley? I remember you mentioned him before, but I don't recollect what you said about him. I am afraid I had never heard of him before you spoke of him last time.

The System of M. Geley.

JOHN. You would if you had been a Frenchman. He is the Director of the International Metapsychical Institute at Paris, as I told you, and has conducted, as you might expect, extensive researches into supernormal physiology and psychology—spiritualism, you know, and all that. The results have led him to a theory which is set forth with great clearness in his book, *From the Unconscious to the Conscious*, recently translated into English. Beyond that I know practically nothing of him. His book shows him to be mainly a scientist, partly a biologist, partly a psychologist, and only a very little of a philosopher; and it is, in its own department, the most important and revolutionary work that has appeared since the *Origin of Species*.

MR. BANKS. I must get it.

JOHN. Do! Now Geley subjects the mechanist conception of the Universe and of the individual, which I outlined a few minutes ago, to an examination, of which the results must for him fulfil two primary requisites, which are, as it were, laid down in advance. The first is that of explaining the phenomena usually known as spiritualism, in which, of course, Geley is specially interested; the second is that of squaring with the philosophy of Schopenhauer, by whom he is particularly impressed. Are you acquainted with that philosophy?

MR. BANKS. Not much, I fear.

JOHN. It doesn't matter. I will explain as much of

it as is necessary for our purpose when we come to it. Bearing in mind the results to be arrived at, the mechanist conception is shown to stand the test of Geley's examination very poorly ; he has, in fact, no difficulty in convicting it of complete inability to account for the phenomena of life and evolution as we know them. The classical mechanist concept, which regards evolution as proceeding entirely from the operation of the laws of cause and effect in the world of matter, is, according to Geley, unable, among other things, to explain the origin of species, the origin of instincts, the transformation of species, whereby a species suddenly throws off what is known as a sport which gives rise to a new species, the evolution and changes undergone by the insect, the growth of the human body, the maintenance of the form of the human body, and the repair of organic tissue which has been damaged.

Mr. Banks. Ye gods ! What a list !

John. Yes, and I am not going into it in any detail. A word or two will suffice to show the sort of thing that Geley is after.

Take the question of sports. It is now generally agreed, as the result of the experiments of a Dutchman called De Vries, that evolution, instead of proceeding, as was generally supposed, by a gradual modification of species due to a more and more complete adaptation to environment, does in fact proceed by the quite sudden appearance of entirely new developments in a species called sports, which nothing in the previous development or character of the species has in any way foreshadowed. The evening primrose is, I believe, about to exfoliate, or is in process of exfoliating a sport of this kind, and this sport may become the origin of an entirely new species of primrose. Once the sport appears, the ordinary factors of selection and adaptation to environment account for its future development, determining whether it will survive and develop or whether it will die out ; but these factors are quite unable to account for its sudden appearance. If it is environment that conditions variation, it would require a complete and sudden change of environment to account for a sport. But no such change is in fact necessary.

Or take the case of the insect. The insect, as you know, goes through a series of astounding changes in its life, than

which none are more remarkable than the changes that take place when the grub goes into the chrysalis, a stage at which, I would have you note, it is almost completely isolated from the influence of external agencies. In the chrysalis there takes place what is called the histolysis of the grub, whereby all its organs are destroyed and reduced to an amorphous pulp preparatory to the coming transformation into the insect. These complete changes cannot be accounted for by the interplay of mechanical factors. There must be something in control, something with a purpose, some directive idea, call it what you will, according to whose plan the various transformations take place.

Take one more instance, this time from the human organism. The parallelist conception of psychology, to which I referred some time back, presupposes the view that the human body is a collection of cells each having a kind of real, independent existence of its own, which, by coming together into a certain kind of grouping, constitute the organism called the body, much as a collection of persons coming together constitute a city. There is, however, no centralised direction of the group, for that would involve some kind of independent consciousness or mind controlling and conditioning matter, whereas, as we saw, consciousness is, on this view, an incidental and unimportant product of matter and is conditioned by it.

But if the cells are just loosely grouped, if they are not bound by any necessary tie and do not owe allegiance to any single authority, how do they invariably maintain that one grouping which gives to each individual its specific form? How, short of a controlling and purposive consciousness, do they create out of themselves new cells for the express purpose, let us say, of forming a new leg in place of the old one lost by a living crab, seeing that there is no change in the outer environment necessitating the sudden growth of an extra leg?

One more consideration and I will leave this part of the argument, since the details of the discomfiture of the mechanists are for the biologists to elaborate, our interest being mainly in the conclusions that follow on their discomfiture. There is a convincing argument, and, if I mistake not, one used by Bergson, which consists in putting the following

question to the mechanists: Why, if evolution is, as you say, simply the process of progressive adaptation to environment, did it not stop long ago? Many species evolved at a comparatively early stage in the world's history are, if not perfectly adapted to environment, at least as well as or better adapted to it than human beings. The amœba and the jelly-fish are subject to fewer diseases, the tortoise has an enormously longer life, while the offspring of almost any creature you like to name is more self-reliant and less helpless in face of the forces of nature than the human infant. And nature, recognising this fact, has permitted many species which have arrived at a stage of adequate adaptation to remain constant: they cease to develop or vary; evolution has, in fact, stopped along that particular line. Why then, if adaptation to environment is the only motive force behind evolution, did not evolution stop everywhere? Why indeed, unless it is that adaptation to environment, natural selection, and the rest, are not the motive forces behind evolution, which must be interpreted on other lines? Does not this continual evolution of new species, even after the supposed goal of adaptation to environment has been reached, suggest that evolution is impelled, as it were, by a constant push from behind, a force which insists on expressing itself in constantly new forms and producing continually new types in pursuit of some purpose of its own?

Mr. Banks. You mean Bergson's *élan vital*, his constant change or flux?

John. Bergson, I think, uses this as an argument for the *élan vital*, but you will remember that we found his view to be not without its difficulties. All that I want to do now is to point out that his argument does seem to be valid against any mechanist conception of the Universe, and as such may be added to the considerations brought forward by M. Geley, of which I have given a few instances, to convict the mechanist hypothesis of failure to fit the facts. But you will understand that through all this Geley is only dealing with preliminary considerations: he is roughly surveying ground that has been covered by others; he has still to play his trump card, and his trump card is the phenomena of supernormal personality: all that group of manifestations and appearances known popularly as spiritualism.

MR. BANKS. But is there one feature common to them all? Can there indeed be one common feature which characterises spirit appearances, ghosts, telepathy, table rapping, automatic writing, hypnotism, clairvoyance, lucidity, thought-reading, and all the rest of them?

Supernormal Psychology.

JOHN. They may not have any common feature, except in so far as they all unite in demanding a very special kind of hypothesis to account for them. What is more, they are absolutely unaccountable on the ordinary hypothesis by which the mechanists have explained evolution.

MR. BANKS. But why account for them at all? There is no necessity to account for what does not exist, and you are not seriously going to tell me that a man with a critical, sceptical kind of brain like yours not only believes in the quackery, charlatanry, hypocrisy and divine flapdoodle generally, which, under the name of spiritualism, imposes itself upon idle and well-to-do old women who find the afternoons hang heavily on their hands, but pays it the compliment of allowing it to influence his philosophy to the extent of holding the scientists accountable for their failure to give an account of it?

JOHN. Very eloquent of you, Mr. Banks! I must say I should have expected the believer in the *élan vital* and the glorified lavatory of the Freudian unconscious to be sceptical about spiritualistic phenomena. It requires a very special kind of credulousness to be sceptical about spiritualism.

MR. BANKS. A special kind of credulousness! What do you mean?

JOHN. I mean a very extreme kind. You see you are required to believe that many of the most sincere and most eminent investigators of our age, together with numberless witnesses, both wise and foolish of all the ages that are recorded in history, are and were either deliberate liars and cheats—and liars too where the lying, even when extending over hundreds of years, is characterised by remarkable unanimity—or else victims of self-deception of the simplest and most obvious kind. To believe that seems to me to demand a credulity before which the act of faith involved in the adoption

of a favourable attitude towards phenomena whose existence there is no theoretical reason whatever to doubt, but which, on the contrary, are supported by practical evidence of the most elaborate and well-attested character, pales into insignificance.

MR. BANKS. But surely you admit that cheating and deception are rampant. All the rogues and charlatans who are too lazy to do a decent hand's turn of work make themselves out to be mediums in direct communication with the unseen world, and play upon the affections of credulous people by pretending to give them messages from their dead relatives, to call up visions from the spirit world, and to perpetrate all manner of similar imbecilities.

JOHN. Yes, I know: the Rev. Vale Owen and all that! Such people make me as indignant as they do you. But I can admit all that; I can admit, if you like, that three-fourths of what passes as spiritualism is trickery, without in the least admitting that all spiritualism is trickery. And just as strongly as I do believe that most of it is trickery do I also believe that the remainder is not trickery. The evidence is too voluminous and too conclusive. It can't all be explained away, and there is, after all, no reason why it should. For though, as I say, such phenomena are inexplicable on the ordinary mechanist hypothesis of the Universe and parallelist hypothesis of the Self, there are other hypotheses which not only explain how these occurrences take place, but actually demand that they should take place. One of these hypotheses is M. Geley's, and if you will allow me I should like to get back to him as soon as possible.

MR. BANKS. By all means. But I am afraid that, as I have not studied the subject, you ought briefly to explain to me what these phenomena are which are incomprehensible on the ordinary, classical conception of the Self.

JOHN. Well, let me take the most important. You know that in a mediumistic séance a form commonly appears, or, to use the customary expression, is materialised, frequently at some distance from the medium, which purports to be a disembodied spirit. Careful investigation has shown that the actual substance of which the materialisation is formed is a portion of the substance of the medium's body exteriorised.

What usually happens apparently is that a kind of formless substance like a membrane issues from the medium's body —sometimes it is in the form of a mist, sometimes it is sheer, indeterminate, membranous tissue—and then moulds itself into definite, though rapidly changing shapes. Sometimes these shapes separate themselves entirely from the body of the medium, so that a separate and distinct bodily organism is formed ; but in all cases the shape seems to be reabsorbed sooner or later into the body of the medium. Now, whether these shapes, which talk and move, are the temporary lodging-places of disembodied spirits, or whether they are only some aspect of the medium's personality—an emanation of the unconscious, if you like—which guides their movements and speaks through them, need not detain us here. The important point is that the sudden exteriorisation of a portion of a person's body, its reduction to formless matter and subsequent appearance under another shape, cannot be explained in terms of adaptation to environment, or as the result of the interplay of material forces. If the material directs and moulds the mental, if there is no creative will or purpose in the world, if the Universe proceeds as the result of the selection of chance variations, then it is impossible to explain why these phenomena should take place. Granting their existence, granting, in fact, our superiority to that credulity I referred to above, then we must necessarily explain them in terms of a theory which admits the control by mind of matter, or, not to beg the question by the use of the word mind, admits the existence of some non-material force which uses matter for its own purposes and in its own way, and so moulds it into the shape it requires.

This, indeed, is the kind of conclusion to which the various lines of facts to which Geley draws our attention infallibly point, the conclusion that there is a directing idea, controlling force—call it what you will—which expresses itself in all the phenomena of evolution, and continually pushes forward evolution by means of ever-changing manifestations in matter in fulfilment of some purpose of its own. What we have now to do is to formulate the theory in terms of which the existence of such a force and all that it means can be most adequately expressed.

MR. BANKS. Is that what you mean by the Vitalist conclusion ?

JOHN. Yes. It is the only alternative to mechanism, and is a theory which, in some one or other of the numerous forms in which it has found expression, is as old as the hills. The commonest form of it postulates the existence of an omnipotent, benevolent deity, who, having created the Universe for some purpose of his own, continually guides evolution to its predestined end. That he permits the appearance or reality of free will to the creatures he evolves is accepted as part of his omnipotence, the omnipotent conception being invoked as a kind of *deus ex machina* to solve all the insoluble difficulties and contradictions to which the theory gives rise.

But this conception need not detain us here. Nobody of intelligence outside the church believes in it.

MR. BANKS. You might as well add, "or inside the church," for it is not to be expected that intelligence should be found there.

JOHN. On the contrary, it requires intelligence of a very high order to explain or explain away pain and evil ; and this is what those who believe in God must needs do. However, we are not here to talk theology. Another form of the Vitalist conclusion is to be found in the philosophy of Bergson, but we have already discussed and found occasion for stumbling in that philosophy.

So let us turn to Schopenhauer, from whom, as I said above, Geley may in a manner be said to start, and see what he has to offer towards the explanation of the facts Geley has collected. I think you said you were not acquainted with his philosophy ?

MR. BANKS. I have some knowledge of it—not much, I am afraid ; and I have read his *Essay on Women.*

JOHN. Of course ! Everybody reads that. It so thoroughly and comfortably justifies one in any little irritation one may from time to time feel with members of the sex : married men find it a constant source of consolation. But I was, of course, speaking of his metaphysics. Shall I just briefly run over as much of it as is relevant to our purpose ? It can be done in a few sentences.

MR. BANKS. Please do.

The Metaphysic of Schopenhauer.

JOHN. Schopenhauer held that there was only one thing which was ultimately real in the Universe. This reality was an irrational, non-logical principle which he called the Will. The Will is not thought, and it is not spirit ; it is best described as a sort of effort, a wanting or striving of any and every kind. The Will manifests itself in various representations; one of these representations is human consciousness, another is the collection of apparently real and solid objects which we call matter. The relation between the Will and its various representations is the same as the relation between Kant's thing in itself and the various appearances of the thing in itself which are known to mind—you will remember that we mentioned Kant's view when discussing Bergson—it is, in fact, the relation between reality and appearance. All appearances are temporary, and are duly reabsorbed into the Will. The Will, which is real and permanent, cannot therefore be known by mind, which is a temporary representation of it. It follows that consciousness, being temporary, ceases at death, while that part of the individual which is the Will, apart from its temporary representation in consciousness, persists but persists only to be merged again in the universal Will.

It is the nature of the Will to be a vast, omnipresent unconsciousness without motive and without purpose ; and the seat of the Will in the individual is therefore to be found in the unconscious. The functioning of our bodies, of which we are normally unconscious, as, for instance, the processes of digestion, together with those factors in our psychology of whose origin we are ignorant and whose manifestations in consciousness we are unable to control, spring direct from the Will ; that is to say, they really belong to the Will itself and are of the world of reality, whereas consciousness is only a temporary representation of the Will and belongs to the world of appearance. It follows therefore that we are to place the origin of desire, together with genius, inspiration and creative power, all of which escape our control, in the unconscious ; while everything that happens in consciousness is to be interpreted as a representation of some directive, controlling principle which is itself outside consciousness.

With Schopenhauer's pessimism I need not trouble you here. It arises from the fact that as the Will to live in the individual manifests itself in a series of wants, and as wanting implies pain, while momentary satisfaction only prepares the way for a new want, the pains in the individual's life must inevitably predominate over the pleasures.

MR. BANKS. Do you believe that this conclusion follows from Schopenhauer's premises?

JOHN. Personally I do not, and I shall indicate in a moment how Geley tries to prove that the conclusion is inadmissible. But the question is really an ethical one and is outside the scope of our present enquiry. We have still some way to go, you know, before we come to the Life Force, so I must refer you for a further discussion of Schopenhauer's pessimism to works on ethics.

MR. BANKS. Well, the sketch of Schopenhauer's metaphysics has not been without interest, but it seems to have carried us a long way from psychoanalysis and from M. Geley with whom we started, and to have brought us no nearer to the Life Force, where I understand we are to end. How is it to our purpose after all?

Geley's Adaptation of Schopenhauer.

JOHN. It is very much to our purpose. So much so that we can now take it as our starting point and retrace our steps to M. Geley, picking up the scattered threads that we have left in the air, so to speak, on our way. You will remember that we left Geley looking round for a sort of general, directing idea, a force or principle, thought of by Geley as purposive, in terms of which to explain the phenomena of normal and supernormal psychology, for which the ordinary conceptions of evolution and psychology fail to account.

Well, he finds this principle in Schopenhauer's Will, to which he gives the somewhat forbidding name of a "dynamo-psychism." This dynamo-psychism, which is conceived of as a sort of concrete energy or dynamic force, is the motive power behind evolution. The Universe and everything within it, including both matter and consciousness, are simply the various representations of this dynamo-psychism. The

dynamo-psychism is eternally one and the same: its representations are innumerable and ever changing.

Now, starting from the conception that matter is just one among a number of representations of the dynamo-psychism and subject to other representations such as mind or consciousness, which occupy a higher place in the hierarchy of representations, we can see how it is that mind or spirit is essential and conditions matter, instead of matter being essential, as the mechanists taught, and conditioning mind or spirit.

Problems of supernormal psychology and physiology, spirit manifestations, and so forth are therefore to be interpreted on precisely the same lines as the phenomena of normal psychology. The appearance of a new form from the side of the medium is exactly on all fours with the formation of the body of the embryo in the womb of the mother: it is an expression of the power of the dynamo-psychism in forming and conditioning matter. All that has happened in the case of supernormal physiology is that a portion of the medium's personality has escaped, as it were, from the control of the normally centralised self, and is playing pranks with the medium's body on its own. Secondary personalities are thus like rebellious schoolboys who have escaped from the rule of the controlling dynamo-psychism centralised in the Self.

Starting again from Schopenhauer's view that the Will or dynamo-psychism is primarily unconscious, we shall expect to find its essential residence in the individual to lie in the unconscious, and we shall conclude, as Schopenhauer does, that, though each representation of the dynamo-psychism in consciousness is temporary and disappears with the dissolution of the body and brain at death, the unconscious in the individual is eternal and part of the all-pervading dynamo-psychism.

Strictly speaking, however, it is not the whole of the unconscious which survives, but part of it only. We must, in fact, make a subdivision in the unconscious itself. The first category of the unconscious has no counterpart in conscious faculty and knowledge. It is the mysterious essence of the individual, his permanent and unchangeable self, the true dynamo-psychism through which he is in touch with and

part of what is real and divine in the Universe. It is the source of genius, creative power and inspiration. This is the category which survives.

The second category is more like the unconscious as the psychoanalysts conceive it, namely, that which conditions and accounts for all modifications which appear in consciousness. This second category is itself only a transitory representation of the dynamo-psychism, and in all probability does not survive.

I say it is like the unconscious of the psychoanalysts in function, and yet in nature it is totally dissimilar. Geley regularises the unconscious and makes it respectable. Instead of being a sort of dust-bin into which we shoot our refuse emotions, an unlicensed welter of all the primitive sexuality which civilisation shames us into shutting out of our conscious, it is for Geley the most valuable and important part of our personality, the source of all the faculties in which we take pride, the casket in which is locked the peculiar secret of our own individuality. It is in the unconscious that the artist finds his inspiration; it is from the unconscious that the genius draws his creative power. And the explanation of the paradox that it is only when we abandon conscious effort that we can do our best work, that we must let our brains lie fallow before we can create, that inspiration comes only in reverie and day-dream, and that the sleeper who goes to bed with a brain teeming with unsolved problems, harassing indecisions and competing courses, wakes to find his problems solved, his indecisions decided, and his way of action plain, lies in the fact that the unconscious can only be induced to function when the conscious is in abeyance. And this conclusion is, I think, fully in accord with the facts. It is a commonplace that men of highly-developed reasoning powers are lamentably unable to make the smallest, practical decision without painful hesitation and vacillation. Why? Because they have developed their conscious at the expense of their unconscious: because they insist on marshalling and balancing the reasons for and against a course of action, instead of leaving the decision to the sure but unreasoning impulse that comes from the unconscious.

Why does the expert always fail in business? Because

he accumulates and remembers details, and tries to decide rationally on the balance of the evidence : he cannot see the wood for the trees : he has not, in fact, trained his unconscious by forgetting enough.

The successful business man and the great commander, on the other hand, are accustomed to give rapid decisions which they are totally unable to justify. Doctors give by instinct correct diagnoses which they are unable to explain. Juries give the correct verdict without appreciating the arguments of the K.C.'s or the summing-up of the judge. Decide according to the notions of common sense is the recipe for practical success in life, and never give reasons for your decisions, for, as Lord Mansfield said : " Your judgments will probably be right, but your reasons will certainly be wrong."

It seems a comforting doctrine, does it not, for it teaches that if we will only slacken effort the unconscious will do our work for us. That does not mean, of course, that conscious effort is unnecessary. Conscious effort is essential for making actual in the world of concrete fact the suggestions and inspirations that spring from the unconscious Self. But the origin of desire, thought, emotion and initiative must in each case be sought outside the bounds of consciousness.

It is, I think, to the lasting credit of Geley that he has rescued the unconscious from the stigma of disreputability placed upon it by the psychoanalysts, and made it fit for decent society.

Mr. Banks. Please stop a moment. You are running on so fast, and so much of this is new to me, besides being very difficult, that I doubt if I have succeeded in following you very closely. Geley seems terribly difficult, or at least . . .

John. He isn't really ; he is, in fact, peculiarly easy to read. But I am afraid I have made him seem so by the necessity I have been under of condensing great tracts of argument in order to give you a brief outline of his theory, an outline which should be at the same time comprehensive and of manageable dimensions, before passing on to my own. And you understand, of course, that I have simply stated some of his main conclusions without touching upon the

wealth of argument and evidence, mainly of a scientific character, with which he supports them.

MR. BANKS. Yes, I understand that; but that is not what I meant at all. What I did mean to say before you interrupted me was that, although I may not have followed all the arguments of M. Geley, I have at least detected an inconsistency in your own.

JOHN. And where, pray?

MR. BANKS. Why, about the unconscious. First of all you roundly criticise the psychoanalysts for asserting all manner of things about the unconscious, which, on their own premises, must necessarily remain unknown, and then you proceed to state, with every appearance of approval, a number of characteristics of M. Geley's unconscious, which must be equally unknown. How, pray, on your own showing, can you know that the unconscious is the source of genius if its unconsciousness places it outside your possible knowledge?

Interpenetration of Conscious and Unconscious.

JOHN. Good! I am glad you appreciated my argument against the psychoanalysts so thoroughly; but it won't work with M. Geley. I was just coming to that when *you* interrupted me. One of his cardinal points is this: instead of there being fixed an impassable gulf between the unconscious and the conscious, as the psychoanalysts suppose, or between the Will or Thing in Itself and its various representations as Schopenhauer supposed, the two shade into each other by imperceptible degrees, continuously interpenetrate, and continuously transfer possessions and faculties from one to the other.

Let me give some instances: again you will understand I am only stating dogmatically what I believe to be established facts, and leaving you to turn to M. Geley for the evidence which he adduces in support of these facts. First, the unconscious is continually passing into consciousness (e.g. in the phenomena of inspiration and sudden decision) on the lines I have just indicated: it rises daily into consciousness, controls it and directs it. All the so-called innate characteristics of which we are conscious, fits of temper, personal idiosyncrasies, dislike of cats, mental twists and

habits, whatever, in short, it is that makes of us unique individualities with differences from others, are characteristics which appear in the conscious direct from the unconscious. But the reverse process is also at work. The passage from the conscious to the unconscious is equally well established. The memory of every thought, desire or experience that has ever been ours, on passing out of consciousness, passes into the unconscious and remains latent there. Our conscious life is really a succession of lives. The conscious child of five is just a different person so far as his conscious is concerned from the conscious youth of twenty and the conscious old man of eighty. But the continuity of personality is nevertheless maintained by the transference to the unconscious of all the memories appertaining to each successive state, so that the unconscious registers, as it were, a complete record of the development and wane of the conscious individual.

These statements I believe to be facts and to be supported by detailed evidence. What follows is a conjecture of Geley's.

All the acquisitions of consciousness during a lifetime, on being transferred to the unconscious, are transmuted into faculties. The unconscious being develops, therefore, as the result of the continual enriching of the unconscious by the conscious. This enriching and development of the unconscious is the source of new faculties which appear in consciousness not in this life, but in a succeeding life, in the shape of innate aptitudes and capacities. The unconscious, or that part of it which is the essential dynamo-psychism, has a permanent existence unaffected by the dissolution at death of the conscious and the bodily organism which are merely its representations ; and being enriched during each successive life by the acquisitions of each successive consciousness, it represents itself in the succeeding life in a more developed and more highly conscious being. Thus the acquired treasures of the unconscious during life number one become the conscious faculties of the individual during life number two ; and thus it is that the area of consciousness continually enlarges as that of the unconscious continually diminishes. This process, according to Geley, is the object and aim of evolution.

Geley's Conception of Evolution.

What, then, is the Universe and the place and significance of the individual within it, as Geley conceives them ?

The Universe is one dynamo-psychism and its representations. There is nothing, not even matter, which is not a representation of the dynamo-psychism, and since each existing thing is merely a phenomenal representation of something which is at the same time its own inmost nature it is reasonable to suppose that it will one day be reabsorbed again into that from which it has sprung. This dynamo-psychism is originally unconscious, and is still largely so to-day ; it is a blind impulse, as Schopenhauer conceived the Will, an unconscious effort in inorganic nature.

MR. BANKS. But what is inorganic nature if it is not dynamo-psychism ?

JOHN. Thereby hangs a tale, which I shall come to in a minute. Meanwhile we have a dynamo-psychism which is unconscious : sooner or later, however, a rudiment of consciousness appears.

MR. BANKS. How ?

JOHN. I don't know, nor does anybody else ; but to this point also I will return in a minute. This rudiment, according to Geley, is indestructible, and once it has appeared it increases. Consciousness is thought of as making its appearance in the form of a series of conscious monads, atoms, particles, call them what you will. These monads are distinct, but have the power of grouping themselves into collections. Each collection forms a separate individuality ; but in each collection one of the monads is in some unexplained way central. This central monad is the real Self. At death the collection of monads which forms the individual is dispersed and reabsorbed into the all-embracing dynamo-psychism. The constituent monads are not, however, annihilated on dispersion, and they retain, or at least the central monad retains, the memory of all the experiences that have occurred to the group of monads which formed the individual during the life just ended. The acquisitions which these memories involve are brought by the monads to the enrichment of the

new grouping in which they will presently again individualise themselves.

The Self is, therefore, just an individualised portion of the universal dynamo-psychism.

Mr. Banks. What is the object of the process? Why was it ever begun? Why should this dynamo-psychism individualise itself into temporary representations?

John. In order to further the object of evolution which is the transformation of the dynamo-psychism from unconsciousness into consciousness. The temporary representations of the dynamo-psychism which make up each individual involve a rigid limitation of the power latent in the psychism. For the real psychism each incarnation in a body is a restriction, as it were, of its powers, these powers remaining latent in the unconscious, which, as I have said, is the most direct representation of the dynamo-psychism in the individual. As a result of this restriction the individual is compelled to conscious effort and endeavour, and the result of effort and endeavour is not only to enrich the unconscious, but to establish the status and importance of that amount of consciousness which has been gained, to refine its quality, to and intensify its awareness of Self. That is why the supernormal faculties such as lucidity, clairvoyance, power over matter, and so forth, together with inspiration and creative power, are rarely accessible to consciousness. If they were accessible, the incentive to conscious effort would be removed. That is why memory, which in the unconscious is complete, remains latent, and the individual must manage with the comparatively limited cerebral memory of consciousness as best he can—memory of past lives and experiences, you see, would lead to undue specialisation along the lines on which the individual developed in previous lives. It is also necessary that the Self should develop without being harassed by memories of previous failures, which might succeed in turning it aside from its aim.

It is urged, then, that as a result of these very restrictions the conscious will continually enlarge its territory, drawing from the unconscious the acquisitions of previous lives in the shape of new faculties, and, as evolution proceeds and the necessity for restriction diminishes, drawing more readily

upon the unconscious for the supernormal powers latent therein. At the summit of evolution the apparent distinction between unconscious and conscious will vanish, for all unconsciousness will disappear in the victory of the conscious. As a final stage in the process the distinction between different individuals will also vanish, for the dynamo-psychism having achieved its purpose of becoming completely conscious through representation in temporary individuals, will have no further necessity for the voluntary limitation which individualisation involves. Thus the end of evolution is not complete individual consciousness, but complete Consciousness. The individual will be merged in the Absolute.

MR. BANKS. This is all very interesting. I should say that the conclusion is almost identical with that of the old intellectual Idealists, Hegel and Bradley and T. H. Green, who believed in the ultimate merging of differences in the Absolute. Isn't that rather an odd conclusion for a thinker starting from Schopenhauer, who was, I understand, Hegel's greatest antagonist ?

JOHN. It is, and it is only fair to mention that it is little more than a conjecture of Geley's, a conjecture which, I may say, is open to precisely the same difficulties touching the impossibility of accounting for the emergence of difference, or even of the appearance of difference, out of absolute oneness that I had occasion to point out in criticising Bergson. But then I think many of Geley's conclusions are untenable. His method is admirable, and while he confines himself to marshalling psychological facts about the unconscious and its gradual and increasing absorption into consciousness, we can only acclaim the value and suggestiveness of his work. I think, for instance, that his emphasis upon the significance of certain biological facts has discredited mechanism once and for all, but where he indulges in metaphysical speculation on the basis of the facts he has observed and collected, he goes somewhat astray.

MR. BANKS. How, exactly ?

JOHN. I am going to indicate one or two possible objections, and then proceed to suggest certain views of my own which follow, I think, from the acceptance of those modifications in Geley, Bergson, Schopenhauer and psychoanalysis,

which the various difficulties I have pointed out seem imperatively to call for.

MR. BANKS. Will those views take us to the Life Force discussion at last ?

JOHN. They will.

Criticism of Geley's Views.

Now, take first of all Geley's conception of the Universe and the purpose of evolution. Quite briefly it is this : the universal dynamo - psychism is originally unconscious ; elements of consciousness presently appear ; it is the purpose of the dynamo-psychism through objectification in individuals to evolve from complete unconsciousness to complete consciousness.

But, first of all, how do elements of consciousness appear ? Can we, when endeavouring to explain the ultimate constitution of the Universe, blandly accept the appearance of an entirely new element for which nothing that has gone before has prepared us, as if such events were as common as the appearance of a new actor on the stage ?

MR. BANKS. But surely the appearance of consciousness is a mystery which nobody can explain ?

JOHN. Possibly, but that is no reason for slipping an event of such tremendous importance into your scheme of things as if it did not want explaining. We ought to be frank about our mysteries, instead of suggesting that they are every-day occurrences. Secondly, if we start with a completely unconscious dynamo-psychism, how can we go on to endow it with a purpose, the purpose, namely, of becoming conscious ? Purpose implies recognition of a goal or end, and recognition of a goal or end implies consciousness. You cannot say first, " My dynamo-psychism is to begin with completely unconscious," and second, " My dynamo-psychism has to begin with that amount of consciousness which the purpose to increase that amount, until there is no more unconsciousness left, implies."

Now, consider the conception of the individual Self.

We have to think of the dynamo-psychism, or rather of an individual monad of the psychism organising itself into a hierarchy of representations, the tissues of the body, the

vital organism, and the brain, which though not unreal are both temporary and unessential and are dispersed at death.

I say that these representations are not unreal. But are they real? Let us suppose, in the first place, that they *are* real. Now, the only real thing in the Universe is the dynamo-psychism, the Will of Schopenhauer, the *élan vital* of Bergson. If, then, the representations are really real, they must be of the same nature as the dynamo-psychism. What is the sense, then, in which, though real, they yet exhibit this property of impermanence, and are spoken of as being the unessential part of the individual Self? How can they be at once as real as the dynamo-psychic monad which is the essence of the individual and at the same time unessential and temporary, in some sense in which the monad (or group of monads) which is the real Self is essential and permanent?

Suppose, on the other hand, that we regard these representations which form the body and brain as less real than the dynamo-psychism, and conceive them as merely the representative and transitory appearance of an underlying reality. An equally difficult question presents itself. How are we to conceive of the dynamo-psychism which is reality objectifying itself in something which is not reality? How, in fact, can reality become less real than itself?

Remember that we are asked to think of the individual not merely as a hierarchy of representations of the dynamo-psychism, vaguely connected with the dynamo-psychism by a sort of distant relationship, but as an entity of which the dynamo-psychism is the inmost essence. Yet this surely is unthinkable, that that which is real and eternal should be able not only to enter into connection with, but to be the cause of, the being of that which is unreal and temporary!

And here is another point. Although we may state as a matter of theory that the real Self is the dynamo-psychism, we never do as a matter of fact penetrate through to it. We are told that the most profound part of the unconscious is in touch with what is divine in the Universe, and this part is presumably to be identified with the central dynamo-psychic monad, which is the individual Self. But we never know this part directly. All that we can have knowledge of is the second subdivision of the unconscious, which is the source

of inspiration and creative power in the conscious, the ordinary psychoanalytic unconscious, the seat of latent memory and cryptic powers, with the capacity for interpenetration tacked on. But we are distinctly told that this part of the unconscious is only a representation of the dynamo-psychism like the rest. How then, we may ask, is the gradual emergence of the dynamo-psychism into consciousness to be assisted by the increasing surrender of the unconscious to the conscious in the individual, seeing that the unconscious which diminishes in area by passing into consciousness in the developing individual, is not the dynamo-psychism itself, or at least is only to be regarded as the dynamo-psychism if we give up the representation theory and regard all the items in the individual's make-up as equally real ?

One more difficulty over the Self, and then we may leave M. Geley, having first impounded such of his views as we may want for the building up of our own.

The Self is formed by the grouping of a number of monads, which are individual portions of the dynamo-psychism, into a temporary unit. As soon as the group is formed one of the monads apparently assumes a central or directive position, and it is this monad which constitutes the real controlling Self.

But did this central monad possess individualised characteristics inherent in itself which marked it off to begin with from the others ?

If it did, you have the principle of difference and individuality occurring in the universal dynamo-psychism itself. Whence did this principle arise unless the individual was at least contemporary with, if not prior to, the psychism ? But if that is the case, it is not possible to explain the individual by an initial dynamo-psychism individualising itself into monads.

If it did not, then the individual only comes into existence as a result of the association of the monads. There is, in fact, no individuality other than that which consists in the association of the monads : there is therefore nothing central or directive in the Self, no one part in which more than in another the principle of individuality may be said to reside. The individual therefore is merely a collection of monads.

Now, this is precisely that mechanist conception of the individual upon which Geley is so severe, the conception, that is, of mind, the conscious Self, and the rest being simply the result of the association and interaction of a group of cells, instead of being the expression of a directive controlling idea behind the cells. Our difficulty, then, is briefly as follows: If the individual is just a collection of monads, the whole Vitalist hypothesis must be surrendered; yet any attempt to disentangle the real Self from its associated monads on the one hand, or from its various representations on the other, seems doomed to failure. You may penetrate further into the unconscious, you may more carefully study the structure and arrangement of the monads, but the Self behind the unconscious, the real centre of the monads, eludes you.

So much in criticism of M. Geley. His destructive work is admirable; much of his constructive work is admirable, especially when he keeps within his own province of psychology; but when he leaves it to indulge in metaphysical speculation there is, as you see, real difficulty in following him. Be it said, however, in his defence that he is as modest and tentative about his metaphysics as he is trenchant and crushing where the mechanists are concerned.

Mr. Banks. Can we not get on a little? I am impatient to hear the conclusion of your reasoning, and I have not much longer to spare. You have spent so long in expounding and then in criticising others, that for your own view we have but a hurried half hour.

John. Philosophy is like that. It must be destructive before it can begin to construct. Any philosophical theory can only be properly understood in relation to the background against which it is mainly a reaction. It is necessary to consider allied and opposing views before giving your own, because they provide the perspective in which alone yours can be truly seen. It is by discovering differences from the old that you detect what is significant in the new.

Still keeping to the old then let us see what we want to retain and what to discard.

Contributions to the Theory of the Life Force.

In Bergson we were impressed with the general truth of

the conception of the *élan vital* as a vital surge ceaselessly pushing evolution forward. We should, I think, accept those of his arguments which tend to show that mind conditions matter (supposing that we assume for the moment that the two are different), and that mental activity overflows cerebral activity to which it does not necessarily owe its source ; and we should consequently reject the contrary hypothesis which asserts that mental activity is always a function of cerebral activity and that the mind is really an attenuated form of matter.

All our difficulties in regard to Bergson centred round two conceptions, the conception of matter and the conception of Intuition. We failed to see how the *élan vital* could account for matter, and we failed to appreciate the function of Intuition, if indeed we could allow that there was such a faculty, in grasping truth and becoming aware of the nature of the Real.

Let us keep matter then as something distinct from the *élan vital,* as something, that is to say, which is outside the flow of evolution and let us forget the faculty of Intuition.

Taking Geley next, his destruction of the mechanist theory may, I think, be considered convincing, and also his appreciation of the importance of the unconscious. Geley's unconscious will, in fact, do for us practically all the work which Bergson claimed for his Intuition, and it possesses the added advantage of being in accordance with the evidence.

In our review of the psychoanalysts we admitted the indubitable uses of the unconscious, but failed to see how, if it were separated by the impassable gulf of difference in kind from the conscious, it was possible for the psychoanalyst to know that it possessed those uses. " Provide us," we said, " with a method of knowing your unconscious, and do a little moral spring-cleaning there before we are introduced, and we are very glad to accept it and all that it implies." This invitation from ourselves to the psychoanalysts meets with little response in that quarter, especially as regards the moral spring-cleaning ; but Geley is more accommodating, and removes our scruples about knowing the unconscious by the device, first, of making it accessible to consciousness, and then of exhibiting it with its powers of genius, infallible

memory and inspiration as an acquaintance which anyone would be proud to acknowledge.

Let us take over, then, from Geley and the psychoanalysts the notion of an immensely important unconscious, which is responsible for giving a special twist to our temperaments, providing the basis of our beliefs, colouring the bulk of our thoughts, and giving birth to conscious impulses and desires. And let us also assume with Geley that the unconscious interpenetrates the conscious, and is in some way more directly connected with that vital force, which we have already got from Bergson, than is the conscious.

Where we found it difficult to follow Geley was in his adoption of the view that the individual himself was a part of or a representation of the dynamo-psychism. The implications of this view, the view, namely, that the dynamo-psychism was somehow resident in the individual, in some deep-seated part of the unconscious, where was throned the central, directive principle of the Self, landed us in the difficulty of accounting for how the real and indivisible could be the inmost essence of the temporary and the divided. A representation cannot owe the fact of its being to the presence in it of what is real without being as real as that which gives it life. And then Geley gave no adequate account of matter. Is that, too, a representation of the dynamo-psychism? Is all that sea trying to evolve from unconsciousness to consciousness? I doubt it. But if it is to be so regarded, the fundamental distinction between mind and matter, the importance of maintaining which I tried to point out when criticising Bergson, goes by the board. It is as difficult to regard mind and matter as both of them representations of an all-pervading dynamo-psychism, as it is to think of them as different forms of change, or as action making and unmaking itself.

Let us, then, keep matter distinct from the dynamo-psychism, and let us get rid of the notion of the individual as a mere temporary representation of a real force or principle, a representation which is nevertheless part of the real force which it unreally represents.

MR. BANKS. What have we left? You have bowdlerised both Bergson and Geley of their most characteristic features. What have you to put in their place?

Relationship of the Life Force to Individuals.

JOHN. We are left with a creative force which is the mainspring of evolution. It is like Bergson's *élan vital* and Geley's dynamo-psychism in its continual and ceaseless activity; but it is unlike these conceptions in two important respects. First, it did not and does not create matter. Matter exists independently, and is in its nature different and alien from this force.

Secondly, it does not constitute the being of the individual, nor does it reside in the individual, nor is the individual merely a representation or appearance or expression of it. It is behind the individual, as it were, and it is constantly pushing him forward: it may be said, indeed, to be the driving force behind most, if not all, of his activity, but the individual is not it. He is continually subject to it, and it is other than he.

MR. BANKS. Surely you are contradicting yourself here. How can the individual be continually subject to it unless he is an expression of it, in such a way that there is continuity of substance between the two?

JOHN. I don't appreciate the difficulty. You and I, for example, are continually subject to a force which ceaselessly operates upon us. We cannot act except under the influence of this force, and we can never escape its influence. This force is gravitation. But this necessary relationship between ourselves and the force of gravitation does not in the least mean that we are the force of gravitation. Similarly a cork carried down-stream is continually subject to the modifications of the river that carries it, and in a very real sense may be said always and of necessity to represent or express that river, since every change in the movement of the stream involves a corresponding change in the movement of the cork. But this, again, does not mean that the cork could not exist without the stream, nor does it mean that the cork is the stream. Furthermore, changes may occur in the cork which are not due to changes in the stream. Now it is this kind of relationship that I want to assert as existing between the individual and the Life Force. The individual is constantly subject to the

Force and constantly moulded and modified by it; but he is not it, nor, so far as his mind and his Self, conscious and unconscious, are concerned, is he matter.

MR. BANKS. You have, then, at our present stage, three quite distinct and fundamental things in your Universe: the Life Force, mind, which exists in individuals, and matter, and no one of these can apparently be resolved into another.

JOHN. At least three, and how many hundreds more God only knows. What about the fraction $\frac{74}{89}$, for instance? That seems to me to be neither Life Force, nor mind nor matter, and yet it is real enough. However, we can't go into the reality of mathematical entities now.

MR. BANKS. Well, how do you conceive of the Universe and the process of evolution if you have all this complication of ultimates?

Evolution as an Expression of the Life Force.

JOHN. I conceive of the Universe at first as being simply material. It is chaos and deadness and blankness, devoid of force and purpose, and possessed of no energy save material energy, if there be such a thing. Into this Universe at some time or other, and for some purpose which I am unable with certainty to define, there appears a force which I call the Life Force. This is a principle of energy and action. It is creative, too, and, working in the medium of the matter which it finds, it can create beings who have the spark of the vital principle in them and are nevertheless constructed of matter.

Let us further conceive of this Life Force as having a function to perform, a function which, if you like, you may identify with purpose, the function of converting this world of dead matter into a living world of conscious life. How will it go to work? It is clear that it will become at once involved in effort and struggle, a struggle with deadness and blankness and chaos, a struggle which seeks to impose order on disorder, to introduce variety and beauty in the midst of homogeneous nothingness, and to infuse energy and motion into the deadness and inertness of matter. For the purpose of carrying on this struggle the Force must obtain weapons; but weapons it has

none, nor can find any save those it can make for itself. It therefore creates various forms of life, with the sole object of enlisting their assistance in carrying out the purpose which it has in view. How to define that purpose more precisely than to say that it is the overcoming of chaos and deadness I do not know, since, for the reason I shall suggest in a moment, we who are the instruments of the purpose are necessarily prevented from knowing what the purpose is.

This much, however, is in my own mind clear, that we are here for the fulfilment of purposes other than our own, or perhaps I should say other than those we consciously set before ourselves, and that if we are remiss in the performance of our function, if, for example, the Life Force can to-day in the light of its past experience of human beings evolve creatures more perfectly fitted for carrying out its purpose, or if we have already played our part on the stage of evolution, and the Force has no further use for that particular weapon which is human will and intelligence, it will supersede us by some more developed and less self-willed being, with as little compunction as the modern soldier scrapped the Mauser rifle when the Lee-Metford appeared upon the scene. The story of evolution is full of the elimination of the failures of the Life Force, and I see no reason to assume either that man is the one unique success or that he will not ultimately go to join the Mesozoic reptiles, the missing link, and all other abortive experiments on the evolutionary scrap-heap.

The Life Force you see is heartless; it has no tender spot for its latest creation. Why should it have? A weapon is a means to an end, not an end in itself, and the only virtue in a "means" is that it should further the end to which it is a means.

The Life Force, moreover, is not all-powerful, nor is it all-knowing. It is not an omniscient, benevolent god who knows the predestined end of evolution, and must be necessarily assured of victory over all opponents, even if his omnipotent all-sufficingness did not preclude the possibility of opponents. The Life Force is limited: it proceeds tentatively by the method of trial and error, and we may assume —we must indeed assume from the history of evolution—that many of its experiments have been failures.

Limitations of the Life Force.

I conceive of the Life Force as limited and liable to failure in two respects.

First, it may suffer set-backs in its struggle with matter. Such a set-back would tend to threaten the extinction of life itself and the reversion of the whole Universe to the dead inertia of matter. In that event the effort of the Life Force to vitalise the Universe, an effort that seeks to infuse into matter the Force's activity, so that the very primary rocks become pregnant with life, would have failed. Perhaps it is fanciful, but I cannot help thinking of the recent European war as such a set-back.

Secondly, the Life Force, through lack of knowledge and foresight, may go astray in the matter of the weapons it forges: it may, in short, create forms of life which are ill-adapted to its purpose. Not only so, but through the necessity which it is under of using matter as a medium for its creative power, a medium which must both limit and distort—limiting capacity and distorting intention—it cannot even create the weapons it would.

Human life is probably inadequate both in respect of its limited capacity and in respect of its freedom of will. There is, I think, no reason to suppose that we are all of us for all our time fulfilling the purpose for which the Life Force created us. Free Will must, I think, be accepted as a reality, and in virtue of our possession of it we are enabled to go astray along by-paths that lead to some subsidiary goal of our own, instead of along the path leading to the goal which the Life Force has appointed.

MR. BANKS. You speak of Free Will, but how can this be? If all our activity is derived from the Life Force, if our mind is a creation of the Life Force, if our will is implanted by the Life Force, in what sense can we be free to follow our own purposes?

Origin of Free Will.

JOHN. That is a difficult question, and of course a pertinent one. But I think a hint of the answer may be found in the consideration I have just mentioned, and that is the

necessity the Life Force is under of working only in and through the medium of matter ; matter, however we define it, being the stuff of which the Universe is composed.

Now we have spoken metaphorically of matter as, in a sense, the enemy against which the Life Force is engaged. Continuing the metaphor, I would suggest the possibility that the enemy, although unable to resist the humiliation of being used for its opponent's purposes, can at least distort and pervert the instrument into which it is welded, so that even when compelled to serve as an instrument it may continue to play its proper part of obstructing the fulfilment of the purposes of the Life Force. The Life Force in short uses matter, but it does so at a price. And the price it has to pay is that the matter it employs is enabled to insulate the current of the Force that animates it, so that the current becomes, in a sense, its own master. In other words, the Life Force can only create beings in a material mould at the cost of surrendering to them the right to use that mould as they please, the right, that is, of Freedom of Will. (See note, page 117.)

Mr. Banks. It is a paradox indeed if you are to attribute to matter the appearance of free will in the Universe. The upholders of free will have usually maintained their principle in spite of the existence of matter, or have even gone to the length of declaring matter illusory.

John. I know. Nevertheless all the evidence seems to be in favour of the possession by the individual of the power to ignore the purposes for which the Life Force has created him, and to act freely along self-chosen lines which may lead in a direction exactly opposite to that in which the Life Force is tending. We have, in fact, to account for the existence of retrogression. Women, to take an obvious example, may defeat the purpose for which the Life Force created them by artificially sterilising themselves by the use of preventatives. The artist who consents to do the work which the world offers him, by succumbing to the temptation of a big, business salary, instead of insisting on doing the work to which the Life Force prompts him, at the cost of starving in a garret in the usual way, is equally clearly betraying the purposes of the Force. Now it is only in virtue of our possessing something like Free Will that we are enabled to act in this recalcitrant manner,

and, since the desires which we oppose to the Life Force, though obviously owing their origin and the fact of their being to our creation by the Life Force, cannot be the desires of the Life Force in the sense of the desires to which the Life Force would have us give effect, I can only assume that this capacity for waywardness and independence is bestowed upon human will in virtue of its objectification in matter. Matter, as it were, interposes itself between the creative Force and the mind or will which the Force has created, and the interposition of the barrier confers upon the created being a measure of independence.

Mind, I don't lay too much stress on this. It is a pure guess, and by its very nature must stand without evidence in its support, since it is a hypothesis which goes out beyond the available evidence—I mean the evidence for freedom—and endeavours to account for it.

Mr. Banks. But if we possess this measure of independence, whereby we are enabled to pursue ends of our own instead of carrying out our function as instruments for the fulfilment of the purposes of the Life Force, what guarantee is there that we shall ever perform our supposed function? Surely it would be both more natural and more pleasant to do what we want to do, instead of obeying the promptings of some blind, impersonal force, which cares nothing for us and whose business, after all, is no business of ours.

John. There is no guarantee, but there is a fair measure of probability. You see, the Life Force has evolved all manner of devices for ensuring that, though possessed of freedom, we do nevertheless spend most of our lives in doing its will.

Devices of the Life Force to Ensure Subservience.

(1) *Genius.*

Take, for example, the phenomenon of genius. Now it is, of course, a notorious fact that society as a whole tends to conservatism. It is static and inert, and remains so without a series of continual pushes to help it forward. So true is this that the rule of an energetic and capable minority is necessary not only for moving society forward but for keeping it alive

where it stands. You have not only, in fact, to put things right, but to hold them there continually, or else they will slip back.

This, of course, constitutes the ultimate and irrefutable argument against democracy, the argument that if you wait long enough for everybody to be converted to the desirability of a necessary reform the need for the reform will have passed away. People are too stupid and too static to be entrusted with the destinies of society, for the simple reason that the achievement of destiny implies movement, and if people were left to themselves they would relapse politically and socially into complete immobility. That is why all the great changes in the world have been advocated by a few energetic men, animated by the conviction that the full drive of the Life Force behind them can alone bestow, and carried out in the teeth of the opposition of the vast mass of society, who, once the change has established itself, cling to it with all the vigour of the lazy conservatism which prompted them to withstand its introduction.

What is true of communities politically is true of them morally and æsthetically. Advances in morals are always due to the spiritual insight of a few individuals, and are strenuously resisted by the mass of common men, who continue to denounce any innovation in the accepted code as outrageous immorality, which will, unless ruthlessly stamped out, bring society to ruin after a period of decadence such as that which undermined the ancient manhood of Babylon or of Rome. New religions are stigmatised as blasphemy, or at best as quackery, and get themselves accepted only after a brutal persecution of their followers. As for art, it is a commonplace that the Bachs, Mozarts and Beethovens have only become the classics of our day at the expense of being denounced as impudent charlatans and iconoclasts by the critics and academicians of their own, for openly flouting all the canons of orthodox harmonics, which cramp the musical inspiration of those composers who are not driven by the urge of the Life Force to disregard them.

Mr. Banks. That is true enough. I believe that even Mozart, who is now regarded as a model for the orderly weaving of regular and melodious pattern-music, was attacked

by contemporary critics of the Haydn school for his indifferent harmony, absence of melody, formlessness and lack of dignity. It has been the same with every great composer since Mozart.

JOHN. Exactly, and it is the same with all the other arts. Every art form which is to-day regarded as the embodiment of orthodox good taste was yesterday denounced as vulgar and self-assertive sentimentalism. All the evidence bears witness to the same truth: every change in politics, morals, art, or any other department of human activity, only establishes itself in the teeth of the vested interests it displaces and the deep-rooted prejudices it disturbs.

Were it not for the great artists, thinkers and reformers the world would stand still. Now a world which was stationary in respect of its mental, social or æsthetic life would be as obstructive to the purposes of the Life Force as a world which was stationary in respect of evolution. Mental, moral and æsthetic progress are, in fact, only special departments of the general evolution behind which the Life Force is driving Given, then, the natural tendency of human beings to stagnate, and their determination to put up with the present under cover of the names of orthodoxy and respectability, rather than go to the trouble and disturbance which the carrying out of the purposes of the Life Force would involve, what does the Life Force do? It creates a genius, and sends him into the world to give conscious expression to its own instinctive purpose. That is why a genius is always in advance of his times, is always unpopular, is often persecuted during his life, and is invariably ennobled by posterity after his death. Posterity applauds him and stigmatises his contemporaries as blind reactionaries, because by the time posterity has appeared on the scene, society has moved up to the level to which the ridiculed and persecuted genius of fifty years before was pointing the way, the unpractical idealism, which in the genius seemed to his contemporaries little short of madness, being calmly accepted by posterity as the most obvious common sense.

The production of a genius, then, in the shape of a great preacher, teacher, thinker, artist, prophet or reformer is one of the devices of the Life Force for urging mankind in the right direction, the direction, that is, which furthers its own purpose. And, of course, it is of a piece with the entirely

impersonal heartlessness of the Life Force that it should condemn its most serviceable weapon to the most arduous and thankless of lives. The knowledge that he is serving the purposes of the Force that guides the Universe may be, and doubtless is, a source of inward satisfaction to a Christ or a Beethoven, but it does not alter the fact that from the external point of view their lives involve one unceasing struggle against an incredulous and unsympathetic world. It is only the overpowering energy and conviction derived from a direct infusion of the Life Force that enables them to carry through their work. It is this direct and special inheritance from the Force itself that incidentally makes of artists and reformers such incorrigibly bad husbands and family men. They have no compunction whatever in seeing their wives and children endure the starvation which they are cheerfully prepared to accept for themselves, rather than betray the light which is in them by accepting the work which the world offers them. The great artist always insists on doing his own work, for which the world will not pay because it is not ready; and his indifference to the consequent sufferings of his wife and children procures for him the reputation of gross selfishness in proportion as he is in reality more selfless even than the woman herself. Both the genius and his wife are direct instruments of the Force. The woman serves through her children, the genius through his work; yet when the inevitable struggle comes between the two it is the genius who usually wins, for the simple reason that the Life Force can accomplish its purpose through almost any woman, whereas the genius is rarely produced and may not be turned aside from his appointed end.

(2) *The Function of the Unconscious.*

Another device of the Life Force for ensuring that humanity shall fulfil its function is the evolution of the unconscious.

MR. BANKS. At last! I wondered when you were coming to that. You appeared to be forgetting it altogether, so that I could not help feeling that all the time we have devoted to considering and criticising psychoanalysis and M. Geley was so much time wasted, while the careful precison with which

you enumerated exactly what things you proposed to take over from them, and exactly what things you were compelled to reject as untenable, was coming to seem a mere blind, like a cheque that never is and never will be cashed.

Now what sort of unconscious is it that you are going to assume ?

JOHN. The unconscious of Geley. I said, did I not, that Geley's conception of the unconscious as the source of genius, inspiration, impulse, desire and so on, an unconscious which, you will remember, passed imperceptibly over into the conscious by a constant interchange of contents, was one which seemed not only likely on *a priori* grounds, but one which was supported by a wealth of evidence. That is the kind of unconscious I want to speak of now, with the proviso that we are to think of it neither as an integral part of the Life Force, nor as a mere representation of the Force in which the Force is in some unexplained way expressed, but as a thing apart from but created by the Life Force for some purpose of its own.

MR BANKS. Why should it create the unconscious ? If it is true that the Force creates us to fulfil purposes of its own, what is the point of endowing us with such a very important faculty, which, from its very nature, must remain unconscious of these purposes ?

JOHN. That is just the point to which I want to draw your attention. Why was the unconscious created ?

Remembering and assuming for the sake of discussion the validity of the sketch of the Life Force I have already given, we may conceive of the matter in this way. We have a Force which has a battle to wage and an object to achieve. To fight its battle and achieve its object it creates life. In particular it creates human life ; but owing to the necessity of breathing its creative force into a framework which is material and therefore obstructive, a framework which, as it were, interposes itself between the Force and the being it has created, it is driven, whether it will or not, to permit the created being a measure of free will. As a result the creature may have desires and purposes of his own not only independent of the purposes of the Force, but even opposed to them. It is at first sight natural that it should follow

those desires and pursue those purposes, and it is scarcely to be expected that it should pursue a remote goal which is not its own and which it has no interest in achieving.

Why, after all, should man descend to the rôle of instrument, when he might in his own right be principal? Why, when he might be maker of his own fate, should he willingly surrender his independence to serve an impersonal force?

MR. BANKS. Why, indeed?

JOHN. It is evident, then, that if man is to be of any service at all to the Force which created him, it is essential that he should be kept in ignorance of the true facts of the case. He must never know that he is being used as a mere instrument by a soulless Force. If he did know, it is clear that he would rebel: he would fail to do the Force's business; he would claim his right of free will and go about his own. Besides, such service would be lowering to his dignity as a lord of creation; it would demean him to the position of a tool. Nevertheless it is essential that while he retains his free will he should use it on the whole conformably with the Force's purposes. How is this conformability to be secured? Obviously by inducing him to believe himself a free agent when he is really obeying the promptings of the Force. And how is this deception to be achieved? How is the individual to be kidded into the belief that his desires are his own when they are really the promptings of the Force?

MR. BANKS. The unconscious, I suppose.

JOHN. Exactly! The unconscious. As we know, the origin of all our desires and impulses is to be found in the unconscious. So true is this that most of our desires remain unconscious desires, the belief that they were at any time conscious desires for a consciously conceived end being the result of later rationalisation.

MR. BANKS. I am afraid I don't quite understand that.

JOHN. I suppose it does sound a little difficult when put as shortly as that; but it would take us too far to go more deeply into it now. Look up any book on Behaviourism for more on the subject, or come to me again and we will discuss it fully then.[1] The upshot of it is that whatever desires and

[1] See chapter V, pp. 273–281, for this discussion.

impulses do appear in consciousness have their origin in the unconscious. This is not, I think, denied.

Now the important point is this: since the origin of the desires and impulses which supply the motive force for action is in the unconscious, we cannot know what that origin is—all the arguments already used with regard to the impossibility of knowing the unconscious of the psychoanalysts apply here;—hence it is quite possible for a desire or impulse to be prompted by the Life Force without our being in the least aware of it. What we *are* aware of is a desire or impulse which suddenly appears in consciousness, which we take to be our own and incontinently pursue forthwith.

And this is, in point of fact, what I believe is continually happening. The Life Force acts on us through the unconscious; its continual spurring and urging is directed upon the unconscious; it is, in fact, like a battery infusing the unconscious with a series of electrical charges. The modification produced thereby in the unconscious produces a corresponding modification in the conscious, which we, in ignorance of its true source, accept as self-generated and express in action. Thus the promptings of the Life Force masquerade as desires of our own and we, being helpless to detect the deception, can only register our admiration for this further device of the Life Force for setting us about its business.

Mr. Banks. That sounds quite plausible, but you must admit that it is the merest conjecture, entirely unsupported by the evidence.

John. I do admit it to be conjecture, but I would not admit that it is unsupported by the evidence. You and I agreed more or less to accept provisionally the conception of the unconscious held by Geley, and you took my word for it that this conception was based on very suggestive and important evidence contained in his book. Now I maintain that the guess as to the function of the unconscious which I have just put forward, is not only fully in accord with that evidence, but enables us to answer the question which up to the present has remained unanswered, or would have done so had it occurred to anyone to put it: that question is, Why should the unconscious have been evolved at all? What purpose does it serve except that of unduly complicating our psychology,

and enabling us moderns to transfer to the unconscious all the problems that baffled the ancients in the conscious? So far as I am aware this question has never been tackled, the philosophy of the unconscious having consisted hitherto in enumerating "the what" of it, and not in explaining the "why" of it; and yet, if we hold that there is a purpose in evolution, we must fit our unconscious into it by some means or other. Now if you conceive of evolution after the manner of the mechanists, you cannot account for the unconscious at all: certainly it has nothing to do with adaptation to environment. But once you assume the validity of the conception of the Life Force, and take on trust my guess at the difficulty in which it finds itself owing to our endowment of free will, the evolution of the unconscious presents itself as the obvious solution to that difficulty.

And the unconscious conceived of in this way throws light on other problems which have puzzled philosophers. It explains, for instance, why, though most of us believe in purpose and progress in the Universe, we have no conception of the nature of the purpose or the goal of the progress.

(3) *Our Ignorance of the Purposes of the Force.*

Mr. Banks. Surely that is exaggerating a little. Not only have you been talking for the last half hour about the purposes of the Life Force, but I myself have quite a definite idea of what it is that constitutes progress, and so have most other men who have given thought to the subject.

John. Oh, well, if you prefer it, we all have different ideas as to what it is that constitutes progress. It comes to the same thing in the end, for all our different ideas cancel out. As Chesterton pointed out years ago, progress implies direction as well as motion, and direction implies a goal. Yet it is precisely about the most fundamental things, which are the goals, that people differ most. Whether our goal is more law or less law, more liberty or less liberty, an unrestrained licence of sexual desire, or a virgin intellectuality involving the generation of new life by chemical processes, these are just the things about which we differ most. Take the most ultimate question of all: Is life a spirit ultimate and indestructible, or is it a mere incidental and accidental function

of matter? This is the very question that we have been canvassing for the last hour, and we have at least not been embarrassed by any striking unanimity of opinion among the views we have considered. Read Bury's *Idea of Progress* and you will find the same thing. Every variety of opinion has been held, both in different ages and by different men in the same age, as to the purpose of the Universe and as to the significance of human life within it.

You say that I myself have been talking about the purposes of the Life Force. I have, but I have never said what they were. I could not, for the very simple reason that if my conception of the unconscious as a sort of barrier between our conscious and the direct promptings of the Life Force is correct, we can never know what the purposes are to which we are prompted: we can only guess them. Just as we do not directly know those promptings of the Life Force which I regard as the origin of the desires and impulses, which appear in consciousness as our own, so are we ignorant of the direction in which those promptings are tending. If our unconscious were conscious, if, in other words, our conscious were directly subject to the current of energy emanating from the Force, then we should know, or might at least surmise, the nature of the goal to which we are being pushed and directed; only then we might not like it, and might decide to go our own way. The Life Force prefers not to take the risk and communicates through the unconscious, with the result that we all differ both as to where we are and as to where we are going. As a consequence we indulge in philosophy, which arises from the necessity of speculating on what we do not and cannot know: if we were conscious of the purpose and goal of existence, we could substitute for the speculation of philosophy the knowledge of facts.

Mr. Banks. That sounds plausible again; but I want to ask a question here. It seems to me that you are resting these hypotheses of yours, as to our ignorance of the origin of our own desires and our ignorance of the purpose of the Universe, upon the assumption that there is a complete breach or gap between the unconscious and the conscious. The unconscious receives communications from the Life Force, the conscious does not: hence the conscious does not know the origin of

desire or the purpose of life, so runs the argument. Now is not all this rather inconsistent with the arguments of Geley in favour of the continual interpenetration and interchangeability of the conscious and the unconscious, arguments to which, if I remember, you attached considerable weight? What I mean is, that I gathered at the time that you accepted Geley's view as to this interpenetration; if you do accept it, it seems to me somewhat to weaken the hypothesis in which you have just indulged.

You seem, in fact, to be reducing the relationship between the unconscious and the conscious to that which existed between Schopenhauer's Thing in Itself and its appearances, between which there cannot, as you said just now, be identity of substance, nor can there be reality of intercommunication.

JOHN. I admit the justice of your criticism, and I can well believe that in my anxiety to emphasise the ignorance on the part of the conscious of the origin of phenomena in the unconscious, I have insisted too much on the gap between them.

Now, as I said before, I agree with Geley's demonstration that there is constant interchangeability between the two, and that being so I should expect to find in my conscious, not a complete ignorance of the purposes and operations of the Life Force, as my previous remarks have perhaps suggested, but a kind of vague awareness, a conscious recognition which is more a matter of feeling than of reason, that there is such a Force and that it has a purpose. And that is exactly what I do find.

MR. BANKS. I can't say that I have ever noticed it in myself.

JOHN. What, don't you believe in progress like all the rest?

MR. BANKS. Yes, I suppose so.

The Belief in Progress.

JOHN. And have you any evidence at all for that belief? Have you, for example, one scrap of evidence for supposing that the process by which the amœba has evolved into the man is also a progress? Human conceit and the feeling of what is due to your self-respect are, I know, too insistent in their claims to allow you to regard this process as anything but

progress ; but the necessity we are under of evolving a theory which is gratifying to our natural vanity is not in itself evidence for the theory, and for all you know the amœba, were the question put to him, might regard the matter in a very different and equally biassed light.

The monkey, for instance, who is comparatively immune from disease, who can clothe and feed himself, who can climb trees and does not get out of condition from over-eating, who lives out of doors himself and lets the other monkeys do the same instead of forcing them to spend the hours of sunlight in a tube or down a coal-mine, who does not depress himself by thinking or complicate himself by civilisation, and who knows nothing of psychoanalysis because he has no need of it, might justly claim that the latest product of evolution (excuse my unscientific way of speaking of man as latest), instead of being a step forward, is a step backward, a claim which, in an intelligent monkey, the spectacle of the recent European war would only have reinforced.

As a matter of fact, of course the evidence tells both ways, that is, both for and against progress, and you can by a judicious selection prove what you like with it. And yet in spite of this we are as certain of progress as if the evidence only told one way : and we are certain of it just because our belief in it does not depend upon the evidence. Further, our belief is of a kind which, as I tried to show a moment ago, remains unshaken by the absence of any specifiable or recognisable goal. Whence, then, comes it ? We all have it : cynics and pessimists as much as optimists and enthusiasts, seeing that they affirm it even in denying it. Whence, I say, comes it ?

I can only think that the universality of this belief among men springs from a dim awareness filtering through into consciousness from the unconscious, that they are being used as the instruments of something which progresses to the achievement of its goal through them. Although not directly conscious of the promptings of the Force, we may nevertheless have a vague notion that we are in general prompted, and that so much is gained each time one of us expresses this prompting in action. And just as each man believes in the possibility of progress for himself so is there in all men a universal belief

in progress for the race. Ambition which urges the individual to salvation for himself, religion which urges the race to salvation for everyone, are alike universal. What is not generally recognised is that ambition is merely religion individualised; that piety is merely that reverence which we have towards the Almighty because of his supposed resemblance to ourselves; that both religion and ambition spring from the universal urge to fulfil a purpose whose origin is outside ourselves; and that both foster the appropriate belief in progress which the possibility of achieving that purpose implies.

And I would be prepared to go even further than this. Not only is there this universal belief in the progress of mankind to some definite goal, but some, if not most, of us have an inkling from time to time of the nature of that goal. I am afraid that what I am going to say here may seem unnecessarily mystical, and I hope that it will not set you against me.

MR. BANKS. You need not fear that. You have not erred on the side of tender-mindedness so far.

JOHN. I am not going to now. When I suggest, as I do suggest, that the belief in the peculiar status and value of certain concepts such as truth, goodness and beauty, which have haunted philosophers ever since Plato, springs from a dim foreshadowing on the part of the unconscious of the character of the goal to which we are continually being impelled, I am actuated less by any personal feeling of mystic union with or rapturous contemplation of these entities, than by a complete inability to account for this phenomenon in any other way.

Our Concepts of Truth, Goodness and Beauty.

MR. BANKS. You mean by the phenomenon the almost universal attitude of thinkers towards these Forms as being in some unexplained way peculiar and unique.

JOHN. Yes. You are acquainted, I suppose, with the ordinary Platonic doctrine of Forms?

MR. BANKS. Yes, I have read *The Republic*, and also one or two commentators on it. I think I may say that I am fairly familiar with the main features of the theory.

JOHN. Well as you know, Plato was primarily led to it by the logical difficulty of reconciling The One with The Many. How identify the object of thought, which must, he considered, be in some way stable and real, with the multifarious and changing contents of the visible world known to us by means of the senses? Plato found his answer, of course, in asserting that the objects known to the senses were not real, but were only likenesses or representations of a permanent reality behind them to which they owed their existence. As types of this permanent reality he used chiefly to consider the Forms of Goodness, Beauty and Truth. I mention all this because the logical argument is the only proper method of approach to the Forms. But it is not so much to this side of the question that I wish to draw your attention now. I am concerned rather with that aspect of the Forms under which they are presented as a refuge and escape from the exasperating inadequacy of material things.

You are acquainted with the way in which any ordinary object of sense, hot water let us say, points us forward to some continually hotter water, as if there were no satisfaction to be gained in the imperfect example short of the perfect concept of hot water which is thereby suggested. The same characteristic is even more noticeable in things that are good or beautiful, especially in beautiful things. There is no sky in June so blue that it does not point us forward to a bluer, no sunset so beautiful that it does not immediately suggest a greater beauty, giving the soul a tantalising glimpse of something behind and beyond which passes even before it is truly felt, and which in passing leaves a feeling of indefinable longing and regret.

Is it perhaps, that in these visible representations of what Plato called the Forms, a vision of that goal to which the Universe is being moved is vouchsafed to us? We cannot, as I have said, know the purpose of the Life Force: if we did we might take advantage of our free will to thwart it. But we may believe—in fact, we do believe, in spite of all the evidence to the contrary—that the Universe has a purpose, and we may, if we are that way inclined, believe it to be a good one. And it is in these queer intimations of a special and more perfect goodness, beauty and truth, to which the good

things, the beautiful things and the true things we know, point forward without revealing, that we get obscurely through the medium of the unconscious a foreshadowing of the nature of the purpose the Life Force is impelling us to fulfil. These intimations have been the special privilege and possession of mystics in all places and at all times ; and it is through such foreshadowing that they have seemed to themselves to come most closely into touch with the underlying reality or spirit that animates the Universe.

Plato, you will remember, regarded this recognition of beauty and goodness in the material world, and the suggestion they have for us of a something behind with which the mind contemplating them is already familiar, as evidence for the transmigration of souls. It was in the interval between two bodily incarnations that the soul dwelling in some heavenly place had direct and untrammelled vision of the Forms in all their fulness and purity. Thus it is that, when brought into contact with the manifestations of the Forms in things of beauty and acts of goodness during earthly life, the soul dimly recognises the divine essences therein obscurely represented.

Now all this is very fanciful, I admit, too fanciful to be made the subject of philosophic argument and discussion, but it is nevertheless pertinent to point out how closely such a conception approximates to the kind of view I have been trying to put forward.

Geley, as I have already pointed out, has adduced a considerable body of evidence in support of the hypothesis that the Self or some part of it does in fact survive the bodily disintegration which we call death. Bergson takes the same view. It is indeed a hypothesis which any form of Vitalism, Bergson's as well as Geley's, renders on *a priori* grounds probable. If mental activity overflows cerebral activity ; if we cannot find in the brain even the genesis of all that passes in the mind ; if the centre and citadel of the individual's personality is to be located in the unconscious, then it is reasonable to infer that the destruction of the brain, as known to physiology, does not necessarily involve the destruction of the mind as known to psychology, and that the cessation of consciousness does not necessarily involve the elimination of the

unconscious. I think I mentioned before, but if I did not I should like to point out now, how strongly this view of the permanence of the unconscious is borne out by the facts of supernormal psychology, for which again I must refer you to M. Geley.

The interesting point is that the modern investigation of psychology, and especially of supernormal psychology, tends to suggest a hypothesis not unlike Plato's. It seems not improbable that the soul, or if you like the unconscious, survives death, and if it does survive, we may, if we like, suppose that during the intervals between successive incarnations the surviving individual essence, perhaps wholly unconscious, attains, if not to a direct knowledge of the reality of the Life Force and the purpose at which it aims, at least to an acquaintance sufficiently real and to an apprehension sufficiently vivid, both of the purpose of the Universe and of the function of the individual in assisting its realisation, to account for the moving and intimate character of those hints of a reality behind and beyond which we get from intercourse with good and beautiful things.

One further point before I leave this aspect of the subject. We have already noticed in our consideration of Geley's views that the unconscious comes mainly into play when the conscious is in abeyance. The typical instance, of course, is the manifestation of the unconscious in dreams while the conscious is asleep. But in reverie also and in day-dreams, when the conscious is temporarily lulled into a kind of coma which is yet not quite unconsciousness, the control of the individual is handed over, as it were, to his unconscious, so that things hidden in the depths of his unconscious rise up and struggle to the light and become dimly known to consciousness, that is, of course, to the lulled consciousness.

Now it is a significant fact that the times when we are most aware, not so much of actual beauty as of the vague longings and regrets for something yet more beautiful that the sight of beauty excites, are just such times of reverie and day-dream, when the unconscious, which on my theory is in some dim way aware of the purpose of the Life Force, is also most active.

It is the unconscious, then, which feels that there is a

hidden meaning, a something " more " about beauty—though it cannot tell what that meaning or that " more " is—and it is the unconscious which is most directly in touch with the Life Force, both in virtue of its rôle as the filter or medium through which the promptings of the Force pass into consciousness, and because, on my supposition, it has in the intervals between bodily incarnations been more closely connected with the essence of Reality which I call the Life Force, and, as it were, impregnated with its designs.

Thus mystics who desire the more fully to know beauty, or try dimly to apprehend the purpose of the Universe, cultivate a sort of trance and coma, in which their consciousness is as far as possible withdrawn from contact with the external world, in an endeavour to set free the unconscious. This is the secret of the Indian Yogi, who starves and strangles his conscious, feeling instinctively that it is upon his unconscious that he must rely for that knowledge which is in truth forbidden to us, the knowledge of the purposes of the Life Force.

Apprehension of beauty is on this view, then, as it is for Plato, a process of recognition, a recognition by the unconscious of purposes and ideals not yet realised, of which the unconscious has been given an inkling in the pre-natal condition of the individual.

Yet, as I began by saying—and it was, I think, this remark which has, I am afraid, led me into a considerable digression—there is no impassable abyss between the conscious and the unconscious. It follows therefore that in this process of recognition by the unconscious, which I have been trying to describe, consciousness itself has its share, nor is it possible to say where the part of consciousness begins and that of unconsciousness ends. Though it is to the unconscious that, as I feel convinced, the element of recognition in æsthetic experiences is due, consciousness nevertheless plays its part in the process. This it does in two ways : we are conscious of the beautiful object which initiates the process, and we are at the same time conscious both of the feelings of recognition, and also of those of sadness and regret, with which the recognition is accompanied.

Mr. Banks. I must think over all this. It is certainly

very interesting bringing in Plato and the Theory of Ideas, but I wonder if you are not trying to collect too many dwellers under one roof. You have harnessed a rather startling variety of thinkers to draw the triumphal chariot of your Life Force. Plato and the psychoanalysts, for instance, are strange yoke-fellows—and I am rather afraid that some of them may evince antipathies. If quarrelling breaks out, and parts of the theory refuse to cohere with other parts, how are you going to reconcile them?

JOHN. Well, can you personally point out any inconsistencies?

MR. BANKS. No. But that does not by any means prove that none can be found. I am getting rather muddled I must confess. You see, we have been talking, or rather I have been sustaining your exposition, for a good two hours already, and I am not really in a fit state to detect inconsistencies.

I have even forgotten from what all this Plato business is a digression, although I am conscious that it is a digression.

JOHN. I am so sorry to have tired you. Shall we finish another time?

MR. BANKS. Not at all. You may as well finish now. Is there much more?

JOHN. No. I have nearly finished. I have only quite generally to glance at the empirical evidence for the workings of the Life Force, evidence which seems to me to be afforded by almost every moment of existence, and I have done.

You will remember that, before I digressed, we were considering the various devices by which the Life Force induced individuals to go about its business instead of about their own. One device consisted in the production of the genius to awaken in humanity a consciousness of the direction in which movement should proceed. Another was the device of the unconscious, whereby the Force presented to the individual its promptings and urgings under the guise of impulses and desires of his own. I was then led astray to explain how this conception of the rôle and function of the unconscious accounted at once for our general belief in a purpose in the Universe, for our general ignorance of that purpose, and for the strange glimmerings and hints of a reality and a purpose

behind the seeming of the material world that we get in moments of æsthetic contemplation.

I have now to indicate one more device on the part of the Life Force to ensure our assistance in the achievement of its purpose, and that is the phenomenon of joy.

(4) *The Phenonemon of Joy.*

Joy has been sent to attend our activities when they are consonant with the purposes of the Force: it is a signpost which shows travellers that their steps are set in the right path.

Mr. Banks. Now I come to think of it, I think Bergson says something of the same sort.

John. Yes. And his remarks on the subject are so appropriate that, with your leave, I will quote a passage or two. The following are passages from a lecture of Bergson's called "Life and Consciousness":—"Philosophers . . . have failed to take sufficient notice of an indication which nature itself has given us. Nature warns by a clear sign that our destination is attained. That sign is joy. I mean joy, not pleasure. Pleasure is only a contrivance devised by nature to obtain for the creature the preservation of its life; it does not indicate the direction in which life is thrusting."

By the way, I should say that pleasure as well as joy, if we are to admit the distinction, is an obvious Life Force contrivance. Sexual pleasure, for example, is a device for securing the propagation of the species, the mechanism by means of which the Life Force accomplishes the creation of new beings, or the reincarnation of old ones, for the purpose of carrying on the struggle. If sexual intercourse were not pleasant, sexual intercourse would not be so frequent. However, this is by the way; let us continue our Bergson: "Joy always announces that life has succeeded, gained ground, conquered. All great joy has a triumphant note." Bergson then proceeds to show that the deepest joy is the joy of creation. All joy is in fact only joyous in so far as it approximates to this special kind of joy, the joy of creation. The mother, the artist, even the merchant experience this joy of creation, the joy of having started an enterprise which goes, of having brought something to life. The artist does not create for praise and honour, the merchant does not work

for money, for, says Bergson, " we cling to praise and honour in the exact degree in which we are not sure of having succeeded. There is a touch of modesty in vanity. It is to reassure ourselves that we seek approbation ; and just as we wrap the prematurely-born child in cotton-wool, so we gather round our work the warm admiration of mankind, in case there should be insufficient vitality. But he who is sure, absolutely sure, of having produced a work which will endure and live cares no more for praise and feels above glory, because he is a creator, because he knows it, because the joy he feels is the joy of a god."

And there is a further very significant fact about joy to which I should like to draw your attention. Joy always comes unexpectedly. Pursued directly, it eludes the pursuer ; but it occurs incidentally when we are actively engaged in the pursuit of something else. This fact is attested by the wisdom of all the great teachers who have been thrown up by the Life Force for the illumination of mankind. From Buddha and Christ, to Shaw and Wells, they have all insisted that the road to joy and happiness is not the direct road, but the roundabout road which leads through hard work and all-absorbing effort.

This I take to be the meaning of Christ's " For whosoever will save his life shall lose it. But whosoever shall lose his life for my sake . . . the same shall save it " ; and this the meaning of Shaw's remark to the effect that the only way to escape being miserable is not to have leisure enough to wonder whether you are happy or not.

Lose yourself in something greater than yourself, give all your energies and enthusiasm to a cause or an ideal, submit to the restraint and unremitting endeavour that creative effort demands, forget yourself in toil until you are used up, and then acquiesce without regret in being relegated to the scrap-heap, and you will, on looking back, find that your life has been a happy one. Pursue your own pleasure, live the life of direct self-satisfaction, and you will find that satisfaction escapes you, and that pleasure turns to dust and ashes beneath your grasp.

Mr. Banks. My dear sir, you grow positively eloquent. Is this the restrained and reasoned discourse of philosophy ?

JOHN. Even philosophers may grow eloquent, especially when they have done with argument. Let them first state their position, and they may then illustrate their arguments and embroider their position to their heart's content.

But I am insisting on this phenomenon of joy not only because of its significance for my theory of the Life Force, but because of the remarkable illustration which this view of joy has received from the current theories of conduct and from the application of those theories during the last thirty years.

MR. BANKS. How so ?

The Direct Pursuit of Pleasure.

JOHN. It is a commonplace, is it not, that the last thirty years have witnessed the break-up of what is known as the Victorian morality. This has not been a matter for unmixed regret. Victorian morality was dull, uncompromising and narrow : it consisted mainly of a catalogue of " dont's," and insisted not upon what people should do to achieve the good life, but upon what they should not do if they wished to avoid Hell-fire. It tended to substitute the ideal of duty for the ideal of happiness, and to deplore all indulgence save indulgence in self-restraint.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century this attitude to life produced its inevitable reaction, a reaction which, as might be expected, found its first expression in literature.

A long line of writers, culminating in Oscar Wilde, throwing morality to the winds, preached the doctrine of complete self-expression. Moderation was undesirable, or, if it were desirable, could only be attained through a course of preliminary excess. Duty was an empty word, or, if it had meaning, the only duty that was recognised was the duty of the individual to obtain the greatest possible amount of happiness for himself. I need not dilate upon this literary attitude that heralded the break-up of Victorian morality. It expressed itself mainly in aphorism, and one or two examples of the kind of things that were said, believed and acted on will serve our purpose.

' The palace of wisdom lies through the gateway of excess.' ' The only way to get rid of a temptation is to

yield to it.' 'It is an absurd attitude to take up towards life to go about the world approving and disapproving of things; we were not sent into the world to air our moral prejudices.' 'Success in life consists in knowing where to stop, and going a little bit further.' 'We should not let our little wisdoms stifle our big instincts.' 'The aim and object of knowledge is to intensify our pleasures,' and so on. Probably you would find no better expression of this general view of life than its crystallisation into the few pages with which Walter Pater concludes his *Renaissance*.

In a few words, then, their view was this. Substitute personal satisfaction for duty, restrain nothing but self-restraint, and you will live the full, rich and varied life which is permitted only to the man who has the courage to be life's master. Now, considered as the technique of the art of life, this doctrine, theoretically so attractive, was found in practice to have one serious drawback. The enthusiast for experiences would cast scruples to the wind, and go about realising himself with a good conscience; and in due course he would experience the pleasures he desired and attain the satisfactions he sought; but he would experience and attain them only to find the pleasures were not pleasant, and that the satisfactions failed to satisfy. Hence the boredom, the weariness and the lassitude that overtook the theorists and the practitioners of the *fin de siècle* doctrines. Forbid yourself nothing, and you find that you desire nothing; make satisfaction of self your only aim and you will find the self impossible to satisfy; regard life only as an opportunity for amusement, and you will come to echo the cynic's cry that life would be tolerable but for its amusements. It is the old story: pleasure pursued directly turns out not to be pleasure when it is achieved.

It was a strange nemesis that attended these writers, who thought the business of life was to be pleasant and the business of writing to be beautiful, when they presently found themselves supplanted, even as writers, by men who devoted their lives to the service of municipal councils and a glorified civil service, and their books to statistics about housing and drainage. Yet this, in a nutshell, is the history of what happened in English literature during the early years of the twentieth century. Shaw preaching Socialism eclipsed the

waning star of Wilde preaching beauty, and a philosophy of strenuous action in devotion to a cause ousted the philosophy of satisfaction of self. And the fact that no one was particularly surprised when it turned out that the Fabians and reformers were happy men, while the artists and roués remained morbid little clods of lust and nervous disease, only showed that we most of us in our heart realise the truth that I have been trying to drive home, the truth that joy, which is difficult of access and sterile as an end, comes easily and often as an accident.

This, then, I take to be another of the ordinances of the Life Force, that those who consistently pursue those self-regarding activities, which we must believe to be irrelevant to its purposes, fail in that very happiness which they seek, while those who throw themselves heart and soul into some work or cause disinterestedly pursued are rewarded by that happiness which the Life Force reserves for its helpers and allies. Joy, then, is a device of the Life Force to ensure that we shall turn our energies outwards into the external world of action and effort, not inwards into the life of introspection and indulgence.

MR. BANKS. I don't quite appreciate the significance of your slipping in the word introspection. Is that, too, to be deprecated ?

JOHN. I think it rarely leads to happiness. We are rarely sufficiently valuable as objects to repay the contemplation of ourselves by ourselves. But apart from this, the introspective life involves a diversion to ourselves of the activities of thought and feeling which should be busied with the outside world, just as the so-called life of pleasure involves a diversion of energies that should be busied with the outside world. I conjecture that both types of life are useless for the purposes of the Life Force. They involve no thrust forward ; rather their movement is circular like that of the snake eating its own tail. And they bring nothing new into the world.

The Significance of Birth, Love and Death.

I have spent so long in describing the various devices by which the Life Force seeks to ensure our conformity to its

purposes that I have unwittingly been led to include in my description an account of the various characteristics of the Force itself. I find I have dealt with its general nature, with the question of its purpose, if it has a purpose, and our knowledge of it, with its influence upon individuals, and with its method of actuating them through the unconscious. There remains little to say, except to draw attention to one or two significant facts about human existence which seem to me to support the general view I have been trying to put forward, while remaining themselves difficult if not impossible to account for on any other view.

The significant facts seem to me to be these. In all the important events of our lives we are not free agents, but are determined by something which is outside our control.

MR. BANKS. But you said we had free will? How, then, can we not be free agents?

JOHN. In most things I agree that we have free will. But these particular events of which I am speaking seem to be not within our control.

MR. BANKS. What are they?

JOHN. Well, what would you call the most important events in a human being's life?

MR. BANKS. I don't really know: getting a job, choosing a career or a wife, and so forth?

JOHN. There are things more important than that. There is birth that begins life, death that ends it, and love that seeks to continue it in others. Yet none of these things do we of our own free will.

Birth! It is a significant fact that the most important question in our life, the question of whether we shall live at all, is the one question upon which we are never consulted. If we were, I feel sure that most of us would never consent to be born. Certainly we would choose our parents differently. Do you remember that passage at the beginning of *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* about the Durbeyfield children? "All these young souls were passengers in the Durbeyfield ship, entirely dependent on the judgment of the two Durbeyfield adults for their pleasures, their necessities, their health, even their existence. If the heads of the Durbeyfield household chose to sail into difficulty, disaster, starvation, disease, degradation,

death, thither were these half-dozen little captives under hatches compelled to sail with them. Six helpless creatures, who had never been asked if they wished for life on any terms, much less if they wished for it on such hard conditions as were involved in being of the shiftless house of Durbeyfield." Children are not asked: they are pitchforked into life by the Life Force, which uses as its mechanism the pleasure which their parents derive from sexual intercourse; and once alive they have to put up with it.

Life, then, is not a free choice: it is the cost of the parents' pleasure defrayed by the child.

MR. BANKS. But you talk as if life were necessarily a bad thing. I am not sure that I don't enjoy it. Certainly I doubt if I should choose not to be born at all, were the choice presented to me. In any case, if your estimate of the value we place upon life is correct, why don't we all commit suicide?

JOHN. I am coming to that in a moment. Meanwhile, let me point out that your remarks are prompted by your inability to view life except from the standpoint of the participation of you yourself, George Alastair Banks, merchant, aged forty-three, in it; they are also influenced by the horror engendered at the mere suggestion of your quitting it. Naturally you, George Alastair Banks, do not want to commit suicide, but that is because your self-respect won't allow you to contemplate the extinction of your personality with equanimity, and not because you have definitely adjudged life to be better than not-life.

But let us put a hypothetical question to you before you were born. Assume that you are not yet born, but that you are nevertheless in possession of all the knowledge and experience of life that your forty-three years have brought you, and that, possessing such knowledge, you are faced with the prospect of passing just such a life as you have passed. Are you sure that under these conditions you would choose the gift of life?

MR. BANKS. No, I am not sure.

JOHN. But many of the wisest of earth's sons have been sure, and have pronounced against life in no uncertain terms. With Sophocles they have held that the best thing of all is not to be born, and that, being born, the next best thing is to escape from life as soon as may be. What of the regret

for the peace of the night's oblivion when you wake in the morning and face again the prospect of taking up the threads of life? No, Schopenhauer was right! The conditions of human life are such that the pains must preponderate over the pleasures, and, valued in terms of a purely commercial speculation with pleasure as profit and pain as loss, life is bound to be a failure.

The fact that we nevertheless not only get ourselves born, but persistently refuse to commit suicide, seems inevitably to point to the conclusion that our appearance and our continuance upon the world's stage are alike matters outside our control, and that the question at issue is, not whether we want life, but whether life wants us.

And it is because life does want us for its own purposes that, when it has created us and thrust us into the world whether we like it or no, it refuses to let us go until it has had its way with us, that is, until it has extracted from us that quota of service in its cause that our capacities enable us to give. The facts of birth and death, then, and our disconcerting impotence in respect of both of them, seem to me to afford the clearest evidence that we are not free agents but merely the instruments of some force outside ourselves.

Mr. Banks. And love? Surely love and marriage, the mechanism by which the Life Force secures the propagation of the species, as you so elegantly put it, surely these are within our control. A man need not marry and have children unless he likes.

John. Are you sure? Could we really account for the fact of marriage at all in view of the almost universal evidence for the unhappiness of marriage, if the parties were really free agents? Love is, properly speaking, a disease, in which the rational faculties, the power of judgment, the freedom of choice, are all surrendered to an overpowering instinct, the instinct which prompts us, whether we like it or not, to mate and to produce children. But if love is a disease, marriage is a sanatorium for the cure of it. Marriage was invented by the Life Force to ensure that a man should be set free at the earliest possible moment from the disabling business of loving and mating, and be restored to the community to lend a hand with the work of the world. It requires no virtue, no talent,

no cleverness to fall in love: any fool can do it, and any fool can do it because it is really done for him. Men talk of a "genius for love": but the genius for love consists not in getting into it, but in getting out of it, that is, in thwarting, at least temporarily, the intentions of the Force.

Short of this genius, falling in love can only be regarded as temporary abeyance of the powers of reason and free will, a surrender of the sense of value and proportion to an overmastering and direct thrust from the Life Force.

Shaw puts it perfectly, as usual, when he makes Valentine say of this phenomenon in *You Never Can Tell*, that it is "As if Nature, after allowing us to belong to ourselves and do what we judged right and proper for all these years, were suddenly lifting her great hand to take us—her two little children—by the scruff of our little necks, and use us, in spite of ourselves, for her own purposes in her own way."

It is just because at such times the considerations which commonly actuate a man's conduct, considerations of pocket and of comfort, of friendship and of ambition, all go by the board that one is driven to interpret the phenomenon of love as a tremendous drive on the part of the Life Force, determined that once at least in the life of every man he shall cease to take advantage of his gift of free will to rebel, and shall consent to be used as an instrument for the creation of beings, who will perhaps more surely carry out the purposes of the Force than he has done or can do himself.

And if this is true of men, it is ten times over true of women. A woman may educate and cultivate herself; she may pursue apparently disinterested studies; she may acquire knowledge, learning, scholarship and culture; she may even exfoliate a passable imitation of a sense of beauty; she may do all and be all these things for a time, and that time ends once and for all when she meets her man: once that happens all these pursuits and acquisitions are revealed as what they are, mere make-weights and substitutes, second strings acquired at best as a kind of protective colouring because men find a sense of beauty in woman attractive, to be ruthlessly jettisoned as worthless frippery once the woman sees her opportunity of performing the function for which the Life Force created her.

How many married women, after all, do you know with

that objective interest in impersonal things which characterises the man and sometimes the unmarried woman student ?

And so I would rank falling in love together with birth and death as a happening outside our control. It is in these three things that the drive of the Life Force is most potently revealed, and we ourselves are shown to be mere puppets twitched into life, love, and ultimately death, by an invisible showman that pulls the strings for his own ends.

But the showman, mind you, is no glorified person made in our own image. He is impersonal and heartless ; he cares no more for you and me than the golfer cares for his golf clubs, and one day, I surmise, becoming convinced of our insufficiency, he will replace us by something better.

And that, sir, is all I have to say about the Life Force.

MR. BANKS. And I can only tender my gratitude for the trouble you have taken with your exposition. I only wish that more could hear you. Why don't you lecture on the subject ?

JOHN. Unfortunately, no place is open to me. I can't do it in a church because it is not religion, nor in a University because it is not philosophy, nor yet as a secularist because it does not abuse God. But then, you see, it was for just this very purpose, that men might have an opportunity to study and expound recalcitrant doctrines, which refuse to fit into any accepted pigeon-hole of learning, or to label themselves with any title known to the examination schools at the Universities, that this estimable institution was founded.

NOTE. *See page* 90.

The use of a simile may serve to illustrate this rather difficult conception. Let us suppose that a river meets an obstacle in its course which diverts a portion of the main river into a side stream. The flow and current of the side stream will be derived from the main river, just as its life and energy will be that of the main river, but its direction will be different, and will be different as a result of the interposition of the material obstacle which has diverted it. Its course will, in fact, now be dictated by its own reaction to the conformation of its banks, that is, by its environment. In the same way the life and energy of the individual is derived from the Life Force, but as the result of the interposition of matter he can pursue his own separate course.

CHAPTER III

THE LIFE FORCE IN EDUCATION

Introduction.

MR. BANKS. Good afternoon! You did not, I think, expect to see me again so soon. I hope I am not becoming too frequent a visitor?

JOHN. Not at all! I am always glad to discuss any questions that you may wish to raise; in fact that is what I am here for. But I exhausted most of my ideas the last time we talked: I hardly know, in fact, that I can add to what I said then—that is if you want ideas of mine, and not criticism of other people's. Are you sure you would not be better advised to go this time to one of my colleagues?

MR. BANKS. But it is on the same subject as that we discussed last time that I wish to speak. I suspect that much remains to be said in amplification and illustration of the doctrine you sketched for me then. You constructed a skeleton, and I would have you clothe it with flesh. I want you, in short, to apply your Life Force metaphysic to certain concrete questions that I wish to place before you.

JOHN. And this gentleman?

MR. BANKS. This is Professor Cameron of X University: allow me to introduce you. He was much interested in the account I gave of our last conversation, inadequate though I fear it must have been, and he would, I think, like to propound certain difficulties that have occurred to him, more particularly as touching the application of your theory. You see you get round me so easily.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. That is so, sir! All this Vitalism stuff; I've heard it before, of course—the *élan vital* and so on, but . . .

JOHN. Excuse me one moment! I am afraid I am not the man you want after all. You are interested, I understand, in the application of the Life Force doctrine. Well, I set up to be a philosopher, and it is useless to expect a philosopher to apply his theories: it is not his job. He is concerned to discover truth and not to propagate it: if his theory is logical and consistent, that is enough for him.

MR. BANKS. But should he not make trial to see whether his logic fits the facts?

JOHN. Not at all! It is illogical to try to apply logic to life. But that does not necessarily mean that it cannot be applied. Now, my friend Anthony . . .

MR. BANKS. But surely this is running away: if your theory will not stand the test of experience, can you expect us to credit it? If it will not apply, in what sense can it be true?

JOHN. I did not say that it would not apply. I said that I was not the man to apply it.

The Application of Philosophical Theory.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. But surely if you take it seriously . . .

JOHN. I should apply it? Not at all. Do you not admit the distinction between theory and practice, or, to be accurate, between the construction of a theory and its practical application? Schopenhauer, who preached complete asceticism, was unable to control his temper or his appetites, loved comfort above all things and wine next to comfort. He was reproached for inconsistency, but wrongly. As a philosopher, I may grasp intellectually the hidden meaning of the Universe, and portray the kind of life its comprehension demands; but that does not put me under a greater obligation to live that life in my own person than in the case of another. He who drives black sheep need not himself be black, and nobody expects a geometrician to look like a triangle. Nor, if you insist on the word, is the philosopher alone in his inconsistency. Christianity is the official religion of all Western States, yet no State has yet had the courage to shut up its prisons, root out its lawyers, abolish its armies and navies, or perform any of the eminently salutary and

sensible measures which a practical application of the doctrines of Christianity requires. Why, then, must the philosopher practise what he preaches? Philosophers were never adepts at life: that is why they are of such small account in the world.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. But we are not asking you to practise, only to demonstrate the application of your theories to some facts of experience and aspects of thought.

JOHN. The distinction is one of degree, not of kind. You want me to define the special Life Force attitude to certain phases of existence. What, for instance, would a supporter of my theory have to say of education, what of morals? What view of art, what canons of literary taste, would he be required to adopt? These are the questions you would ask, and these questions I cannot answer; for one thing I do not know enough about art and education; for another, as I have already said, I am a philosopher and I am not concerned with practical application.

MR. BANKS. It seems I have brought you on a fruitless journey, Professor.

JOHN. Not at all. My friend and colleague, Anthony, as I was trying to tell you some moments ago, would be glad to discuss with you the questions you wish to raise. Not only is he more fitted to do so than I am, but it so happens that he shares my views on metaphysics and might perhaps be able to deduce from them the Life Force view of art, morals, education and so forth, if such a view can be said to exist. If you will excuse me for a moment, I will fetch him.

(*Exit John, to return with Anthony.*)

ANTHONY. Good afternoon, gentlemen! I understand that you wish to discuss the practical application of some of my friend's Vitalistic theories. The subject is not an easy one, nor has it been systematically studied; but I shall be glad to put any ideas of mine at your service.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. We shall be most interested to hear them. Up to the present, however, we have only talked in generalities with your friend here. Perhaps, then, it will be as well if I indicate at once the kind of question to which the application of his views seems to me to involve the greatest difficulty. Such a procedure will provide a starting point

for our discussion, besides giving you an opportunity of throwing light upon matters which are at present obscure.

ANTHONY. Pray do so.

Statement of Objections to Life Force Theory.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. Let me take then, to illustrate my difficulties, the department of thought itself, the realm of pure reasoning, of which perhaps the most striking example is the field covered by mathematics. Now as I understand your friend's position, it is this—please correct me if I am wrong. The Life Force has created man for purposes of its own: it uses him as a weapon for the achievement of those purposes, and endows him accordingly with powers and faculties which he may use in its service. One of these faculties we may suppose is the faculty of reason. Now reason, working in accordance with laws which it prescribes for itself, discovers certain facts about the Universe: it discovers, for example, that seven times seven make forty-nine, that water becomes steam at a certain temperature, that it is impossible for a tree to be at the same time both a beech and not a beech.

Now reason regards these facts, so far at any rate as the facts of mathematics and the laws of logic are concerned, as unalterable and permanent: in no Universe, however constituted, says reason, would it be possible for seven times seven to make fifty-one, or for a tree both to be and not to be a beech at the same moment. These facts, then, reason asserts to be independent of time, place and thought, and the knowledge of these facts reason calls truth. This then is the nature of reason: to endeavour to establish truths about the Universe which are eternally and universally true, and to regard the accumulation of such truths with satisfaction as constituting an increase in knowledge. Now increased knowledge is a possession, a heritage which successive generations seek to increase and to hand on, enriched, to their descendants. Thus we have a growing body of truths which are absolutely and entirely true, and we tend to invest them with some sentiment of value. Knowledge, then, is good just because it is permanent, is eternally the same and can never be impugned. Now what light does the view of

reason, required by your Life Force hypothesis throw upon all this ?

Will the Life Force theory apply to the realm of thought, to the activity and achievements of reason, the same analysis as that which it applies, let us say, to morality, to religion, or to political institutions ? Will it insist on judging these achievements by the same standard ?

ANTHONY. I am afraid I don't quite follow. What is this analysis, what is this standard ?

PROFESSOR CAMERON. Well, your friend, Mr. John, as far as I can gather, insists that the Life Force, having created us for purposes of its own, and having devised the machinery of the unconscious to apprise us of the direction in which it would have us travel, spurs us incessantly to new activities through the promptings of the host of impulses and instincts that spring from the unconscious. These impulses find themselves in continual conflict with the moral standards established by the community in matters of conduct, and with the accepted dogmas that pass for the religion of the community in matters of belief. The impulses both to new modes of action and to new ways of thought endeavour, as it were, to break through this crust of dogma and moral code, which seeks to confine them within the rigid framework of what has been approved in the past. When they do succeed in breaking through, the result is progress in morals and insight in religion ; there is, in fact, a general advance—the Life Force has gained ground. But it has only gained ground at the cost of the disruption of existing standards of conduct and structures of belief which, just in so far as the Life Force has succeeded in its new thrust forward, are thrown aside and consigned to the scrap heap of evolution.

We have, then, a constant opposition between the new and the old, between the dynamic and the static, between the continual promptings and thrustings of the Life Force and the laws, religion, morality, social observances, traditions, dogmas and prohibitions of society, which obstruct these promptings and endeavour to confine their manifestations in thought and action within the limits of the cast iron mould of what exists.

And just as this cast iron mould is itself the crystallised

form which the promptings and thrustings of the past have assumed in the present, so will the dynamic urge of to-day, which is now seeking through the medium of a few men of genius to break the mould, become subject to a like fate, should it succeed in imposing itself upon the society of to-morrow. Just as red-hot lava cools and solidifies when once it has ceased to move, so does new thought which comes into the world like molten fluid grow hard and static when it ceases to be new: as it wins acceptance from the world which once sought to suppress it, it solidifies and forms a crust. Rigidity is the penalty imposed by respectability, and the heresy which becomes the accepted standard for belief and conduct in the community loses both tolerance and elasticity as the price of success. Thus, the living beliefs of yesterday are petrified in the Church prayer books of to-day; the immoralities of to-day are enshrined in the Family Heralds of to-morrow.

Now through all this process it is perfectly clear that a definite scale of values is being erected. The achievements of the past are pilloried as the lumber of the future: whatever ordinance exists, whether it be a creed, a political constitution, a social prohibition or a law against unnatural vice, is regarded with an unfavourable eye as something which confuses, trammels and perverts the fresh and spontaneous thrustings of the Life Force. It appears that no institution, no belief, no social ordinance possesses absolute and permanent merit in its own right: it is at best useful as a milestone upon the road which humanity has to travel, and its usefulness is outlived so soon as the milestone is passed.

Is Truth immutable and Value constant?

Now the question which I wish this somewhat tedious exposition of your friend's views to bring out is this: Are we to extend this critical analysis, which amounts to a general defamation of the old and the existing in art and society, in morals and belief, to cover the more specifically rational activities of thought? Bearing in mind my preliminary remarks with regard to the positive achievements of thought in the past and the slow accumulation of that priceless possession which is human knowledge, are we to regard these too as

so much obstructive lumber, whose only function is to block the pathway to new discoveries and to impede the course of evolution? Are the absolute truths of logic and mathematics not absolutely, but only relatively, true, or, worse still, are they not true at all, or if indeed they be still true, are they impediments to the vision of greater and deeper truths? Are the standards of artistic taste laid down by the Greeks to be deemed inimical to art, or the principles of jurisprudence established by the Romans injurious to justice, just because their intrinsic merit has forced all succeeding ages to accept them? Or, to put a more extreme case, does the merit of such a writer as Shakespeare diminish by the mere lapse of time, simply because his work has caught and crystallised the æsthetic impulses of the past instead of embodying those of the present? And is Shakespeare then to be forbidden to our young, on the ground that the admiration which he cannot but extort from them will cramp and repress their own creative impulses?

This last is surely absurd. And yet if the doctrine of the Life Force does not force us to such a lamentable conclusion, if it does not compel us to write down the truth that two and two make four as relative and the merit of Shakespeare as ephemeral, on what principle, may I ask, are we to distinguish some of the conclusions of reason and to accept some of the achievements of knowledge as endowed with absolute validity and truth, while impugning others as possessing value which endures only for a time and is relative to a specific purpose? Useful, it is admitted, these latter may once have been, and yet, according to your friend Mr. John, if they be allowed to claim human allegiance and respect beyond their allotted period, they will come to render greater disservice to the progress of evolution in the future than the service they rendered in the days when they enshrined the latest promptings of the Force.

ANTHONY. These are difficult questions you have asked me, and they go to the heart of the whole Vitalist hypothesis. In so far as they raise such questions as the validity of reasoning, the nature of truth and so forth, their import is primarily philosophical, and my friend John would be more competent to tackle them than I. But I understood that the matters

you wished to discuss related mainly to the application of the Life Force metaphysic to certain specific problems. And it is from this point of view that I think I can most appropriately deal with the chief question you have raised. That question I understand to be as follows: What is the bearing of the Life Force hypothesis upon the value men attribute to mental achievement and the belief they have in the existence of definite knowledge? Is there, you ask, absolute value in Plato's Republic, or absolute truth in Newton's law of gravitation? If there is not, isn't it rather shocking? If there is, how are we to reconcile such a conception with our notion of the Life Force as proceeding by the method of trial and error, and throwing up geniuses whose most remarkable products have relative value only, the value, that is, of means, or stepping stones to an end whose realisation will render them superfluous?

That I think is one of the forms in which your question presents itself.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. Certainly it does!

The Academic Mind.

ANTHONY. I think I shall succeed best in my attempt to indicate the view I should wish to take of this matter by describing a certain attitude of mind which seems to me to embody a wrong conception of thought and of its achievements. For brevity's sake I will call this attitude of mind "academic," and the mind which possesses it "the academic mind." I choose this particular example because it will, I hope, serve to illustrate my thesis in two different ways. In the first place the academic mind takes an erroneous view of the purpose and function of thought; and in the second place, by so doing, it makes of itself an obstruction to the Life Force and tends to impede the accomplishment of its purpose.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. But surely the phrase "academic mind" is merely a term of popular contempt. It is used of scholars and pedants, who, lost in the dust and dry bones of the theories of the past, take no heed of the world of the present. I don't know that the term has ever meant very much, just because the senses in which it is used are so many;

certainly it has often been undeservedly applied. I fail to see, therefore, how you can regard the term and the hazy conception for which it stands as significant for the exposition of your theory.

ANTHONY. I hope to make my use of the term plainer as I proceed, and its importance for my theory may then become more manifest. May I ask, did you ever in your University days read Aristotle's Poetics?

PROFESSOR CAMERON. Yes, I did certainly.

ANTHONY. You will remember, then, a theory of Aristotle's as to the function of tragedy. Tragedy purges our souls of pity and terror by exciting these emotions over the misfortunes of fictitious personages presented on the stage: hence the pleasure afforded by tragedy provides, as it were, a safety valve for surplus emotions which would become inconvenient if unable to find such outlets.

The theory is an intriguing one, and at once suggests the question, "Is it true?" You will not, I suspect, be surprised when I remind you that that was the one question that at Oxford was never raised. Undergraduates have written innumerable essays, dons have delivered innumerable lectures on this theory of Aristotle's, but whether it is true or not is the last thing that it occurs to anyone to discuss. There were, however, a number of rival hypotheses, each supported by a wealth of scholarship, including references to other works by Aristotle, comparisons out of other authors and so forth, as to what it was precisely that Aristotle meant to convey by his theory. Did he, for example, conceive of the purgation effected by tragedy as a purely physiological process, the drawing off, as it were, of black bile which, if allowed to accumulate, causes melancholia, or was his theory to be interpreted as a metaphor by analogy from the physical process? Or again, were both these interpretations too obvious, a moral uplifting and purification of the emotions—what the psychoanalysts would call a sublimation—being really intended?

PROFESSOR CAMERON. Yes, I do remember something of the sort. I was always a black bile man myself.

ANTHONY. Well, what does this subordination of the real interest of the theory to a secondary, fictitious and literary

interest portend? Why all this trouble to discover, not what you or I thought or ought to think about the theory, but what Aristotle thought? It is, is it not, a sacrifice of substance to form a postponing of the question of fact for the question of scholarship. And it is just this sacrifice of substance to form that seems to me to be typical of the academic mind throughout. The academic mind takes the thoughts of the great men of the past, and instead of sifting the gold from the dross, testing them in the light of modern research and weighing them in the scales of modern discovery, swallows them whole, takes their unchanging value for granted, and devotes an infinity of patience, erudition and scholarship, to the work of textual emendation and criticism, with a view to discovering not whether the substance is sound, but whether the form is intact.

Thus you can never obtain from the average don his own opinion on any controversial question in the classics: he will tell you what Aristotle thought, or what Butcher thinks Aristotle thought, or what Bywater proves that he must have thought, and give excellent reasons for his view on each point; but to the question, "What do you think yourself?" he has no answer: he brushes it aside as irrelevant.

The meaning, the content of the theory, all that was once living and vital in it have become subordinated to the form; the inspiration of the Life Force has become smothered by the vehicle by which that inspiration was conveyed. It is as if men were to treasure and to hand down to posterity a nut containing a kernel beyond price, and posterity repaid them by going into ecstasies of admiration over the husk.

This characteristic of the academic mind, its subordination of substance to form, which now begins to emerge, may be traced through endless ramifications. Let me take another example of a rather different kind.

Its View of the State.

Primitive man, we are told, finding a state of lawless freedom intolerably insecure, formed society for his own protection; he preferred, as Plato puts it, to surrender his own power of doing injustice to others on condition that they should be made to exercise a similar forbearance towards himself.

Thus, instead of personal violence and the right of the stronger which had hitherto reigned supreme, law, which was based upon the corporate force of society, became the arbiter in affairs between man and man. Society then, or the State, was made by man to serve his own interests because society suited him.

Now observe the steps by which the State which was made for man grew to dominate him who made it, the steps by which form came to triumph over substance. Greek philosophers, observing that it was only by contact with his fellowmen that a man could develop his full nature, only by living in society that he could realise all that he had it in him to be, came to regard the individual as owing a permanent debt or obligation to society, arising from the mere circumstance of his being a member of it. German philosophers carried the notion a stage further, until in Hegel the State takes on a real being or substance of its own, becoming a sort of super-individual with a General Will and attributes which Hegel does not hesitate to call divine. The State is representative of the wills of all the contracting individuals who compose it ; therefore it can never act contrary to those wills, which is to say that it can never be unjust or tyrannical. The State is the source of all that is highest and noblest in the individual's nature ; it may, therefore, unhesitatingly call for the exercise of that capacity for self-sacrifice which it has itself implanted in the individual's breast. The ideal of the individual should be to merge his will in that of the State ; his virtue to throw aside all considerations of self and place himself unhesitatingly at the State's service whenever, in the State's view, occasion for such sacrifice arises. For is not the State after all simply the individual in another form, or rather, a glorified edition of all that is unselfish and noble in the individual's nature ? Thus we arrive at the conclusion that the well-being of the State is of greater importance than that of the individuals who compose it, that in fact man was made for the State instead of the State, as we had fondly supposed, being made for man. Thus the fresh and vital doctrine that individuals cannot live alone but must come together into a community, a doctrine sprung direct from some prompting of the Life Force which saw that its purpose could only be

achieved by the co-operation of individuals in society, is transformed into the dogma that society alone has absolute value, and that man exists only for the purpose of rendering it service: another instance, you perceive, of the triumph of form over substance, of the institution, which was the form in which the living idea expressed itself, over the individuals who conceived the idea and created the institution.

MR. BANKS. I am sure this is all very interesting, Mr. Anthony, but I fail to see its connection with the questions which my friend Professor Cameron put to you. I hope you are proposing to answer those questions.

ANTHONY. Please bear with me just a little longer, and the drift of these apparently discursive remarks will, I hope, begin to reveal itself. Professor Cameron's questions do not admit of a direct answer, at any rate not immediately. I must pursue the method of the impressionists, and sketch in vague and general outline the position I wish to take up, with a view to filling in the details afterwards. It is only when the details are filled in that you will discover the relevance and catch the meaning of the whole. I hope, Professor Cameron, you will pardon the method for all its seeming irrelevance?

PROFESSOR CAMERON. By all means. Please continue.

ANTHONY. In resuming then, let me repeat that the attitude of the academic mind is harmful in two respects. In the first place it maintains an attitude of hostility to each new development in thought that springs from the Life Force; in the second, it constitutes in itself an obstruction to the purposes of the Force by freezing its living experiments into static immobility.

Now these attributes of the academic mind may be observed throughout the whole field of human intellectual activity.

Its Effect upon the Professions.

The academic mind is, for example, rampant in the professions. Some particular department of human knowledge, knowledge of the law for example, or of the diseases of the human body and the ways of curing them, is cornered by a small body of men, whose livelihood depends not only upon their own ability for adjusting disputes and healing

infirmities, but also upon the admitted inability of anyone not possessing the peculiar training and outlook which is characteristic of the profession in question to do the same.

It is important that the doctor should be able to cure the sick man ; but it is even more important that another should not cure him where the doctor has failed. In fact, if the choice could be presented to him, the average practitioner would in his heart prefer that the patient should die under his treatment, rather than that he should recover under the unauthorised treatment of an unqualified person.

The substance of medicine is the healing of the sick ; the form of medicine is the code of prescribed rules and methods, by means of which the wisdom of the past has shown that the sick can normally be healed. But where the form triumphs over the substance, the importance of following prescribed rule and method comes to overshadow the importance of healing. " It is better to die through following the rules than to recover through violating them," says Doctor Bahis in *L'Amour medecin.* That the remark was sufficiently near the truth to be greeted as a caricature and not as a libel is the measure of the prevalence of the academic mind, with its triumph of form over matter in the medical profession. And when Sir Ralph Bloomfield Bonnington, in the " Doctor's Dilemma," is shocked to have to report that he has " actually known a man die of a disease from which he was, scientifically speaking, immune," it is at once recognised that he is more concerned at the inconsiderateness of fact in putting form out of countenance, than at the unexpected death of a patient whom it was his business to keep alive.

The encroachment of form upon substance in the legal profession is too notorious to require illustration. The substance of law is to see justice done ; the form of law is to secure the victory of that particular party which happens to have employed your services. It is perhaps natural that the lawyer should wish to enhance his reputation by restoring to their relations thieves who can afford his fees, but such a performance implies, in the case at least of those whose guilt is known to him, just that sacrifice of justice to personal advantage which the establishment of law was designed to preclude.

Professor Cameron. I hardly think you should press

these instances too strongly. I am not, of course, aware as yet of the conclusions you are proposing to draw, though I begin to see the direction in which your instances are tending. But this professionalism among doctors and lawyers is rather economic in tendency than symptomatic of any fundamental attitude of mind. Both doctors and lawyers depend upon their technical knowledge for their livelihood, and like all bodies of skilled practitioners, whether workers by brain or by hand, form a trade union which must resist to the uttermost blacklegging by persons outside the charmed circle. If persons who do not possess the necessary diplomas and credentials of the profession aspire, and aspire successfully, to do what the professional does, the latter's special knowledge will lose its market value, and, as a result, the professional himself will lose his livelihood. Hence the opposition of the medical profession to such a man as Barker, the bonesetter. It was not that the profession denied the efficacy of his methods or regretted their success, but they did deprecate the performance by an outsider of mysteries to which only the initiated should aspire. Where an outsider can do well what the insider can do badly, the result not only reflects badly upon the insider, but diminishes the value and importance of being an insider at all.

And as the insider is normally too overworked at curing the sick by methods which were up to date in his day to keep up to date himself, he either fails to realise that his own methods are superseded, or if he does realise it, his knowledge that he has neither the time nor the opportunity to master new developments, which bid fair to supersede him, makes him naturally conservative and suspicious of innovation.

It is to this feeling, then, that I attribute the conservatism of the professions. Their hostility to what is unorthodox, their slavish adherence to rules involving even, in extreme cases, an admission that it is better to kill by authorised methods than to cure by unauthorised ones, is due, I think, not so much to a natural tendency to subordinate substance to form, as to a refusal to countenance any innovation which might threaten their own economic position.

MR. BANKS. Hear, hear! It's all a question of trusts and monopolies. Doctors have a monopoly of medicine just

as parsons have of God. You can't get a parson to admit the arguments of an agnostic, because his salary depends on his not letting the agnostic refute him; and you can't get an ordinary doctor to look kindly on psychoanalysis or autosuggestion because their success would make him superfluous. All this is not a question of the Life Force at all; it is a question of bread and butter.

ANTHONY. But is it? I agree that your explanation covers many of the facts. I might agree that it covered all of them, were it not that precisely the same tendency can be discerned in other fields which are unaffected by the influence of economics. If you will allow me, then, I will carry my analysis of what I have called the academic mind a stage further.

We have considered the professions; let us take a glance at education. Now what do you take the object of education to be?

Education. Its Object according to the Academic View.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. Education has many objects, but this I take to be the most important: so to train the mind and faculties of the child that he may leave his school equipped at all points to face the world, and to take his place therein as a man and a citizen.

ANTHONY. This training of mind and faculties will not necessarily involve, will it, the assimilation of knowledge for its own sake?

PROFESSOR CAMERON. Oh, yes! There are certain things that a child must know.

ANTHONY. His A B C, reading, writing and the multiplication table, for instance? I agree, of course! But these things are not so much education as instruments for the acquisition of education, the things without which education cannot be obtained. But as to education itself, we shall insist, I take it, on a child learning things only in so far as the process of learning, and it may be of thinking, trains the child's mind for the performance of those functions you referred to just now, and not primarily for the sake of the knowledge which the learning brings.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. Some knowledge is valuable to the child in itself. It should be in part the business of education to transmit the inherited culture of the race, in order that each generation, instead of starting with a clean slate, may begin the pursuit of knowledge and the journey of evolution where its predecessors left off. If it were not so, if parents and teachers deliberately forewent the knowledge of the past, and insisted on presenting every subject as an open question upon which the child might make up its mind one way or the other, irrespective of the facts gleaned by its predecessors, education would degenerate into a wearisome repetition of the same process generation after generation, and the possibility of progress, which must surely consist in building upon the foundations which have already been laid, would be put out of court.

In my view the present can only rise upon the shoulders of the past, the future upon the shoulders of the present. In order that this may be accomplished, it is necessary that the teacher should impart definite information to the child under the name of knowledge, and should use his influence to mould the child's mind along lines that have been approved by the wisdom of antiquity. After all, our parents were not always wrong; why then should we forego the knowledge which their experience taught them in teaching our children?

ANTHONY. I expected that you would take that view. It is characteristic of the academic mind.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. Surely you are not imputing to me this mental attitude which you regard as so obstructive to the purposes of the Life Force? My mind moves; it is not static.

ANTHONY. Nevertheless, I hold that the attitude to education which you have just expressed is one of the most unmistakable characteristics of the academic mind, and that it expresses itself in a vicious subordination of substance to form.

To excuse myself from the charge of dogmatic rudeness, I had better indicate the reasons why, to my mind, this view of education is erroneous These reasons will, at the same time, serve to give a general idea of the connection which I wish to establish between the academic mind and the theory of

the Life Force : for my objection to your view is briefly this : that, by perpetuating and exhibiting as an object of admiration what is old, it suppresses what is creative and new in the mind of the child, and encourages what is possessive and conservative.

I. What is the Acquired Culture which Education Transmits ?

I think that three rather different objections may be brought against your theory of education, and the first objection is this. You said that it is the purpose of education, at any rate in part, to transmit to posterity the acquired culture of the race. But what is the acquired culture of the race ? Your theory assumes that there are in existence a definite body of established knowledge in the special sciences, an agreed and authoritative view of the history of the world, and certain criteria of artistic and literary value which are constant and unchallenged.

Nothing of the sort appears to me to exist. I hope to enlarge upon this point later when I return to your main contention that the Life Force theory precludes the possibility of a permanent standard of value, and rejects the notion of absolute and ascertained truth. For the moment, however, it is sufficient for me to demonstrate to what, in the absence of any definite and accepted body of knowledge, this business of transmitting the acquired culture of the race in practice reduces itself.

Education in History.

(*a*) In the first place, take history. It is a notorious fact, upon which it is unnecessary to enlarge, that each nation selects those historical events which redound to its own credit, and omits or glosses over those which present it in a less favourable light. English histories, for example, while expatiating upon the glories of the campaigns of Henry V, dismiss almost in a paragraph the series of discreditable reverses which led to the all but complete loss of France by the English in the reign of Henry VI.

The various extant accounts of the battle of Waterloo typify a tendency which they may almost be said to

burlesque. The facts about the battle of Waterloo are known with minute accuracy ; yet careful arrangement and selection succeed in presenting them in an entirely different light to the children of England, of France and of Germany. The ordinary English boy believes that the Prussians played hardly any part in the victory, the ordinary German boy that the British were on the point of defeat when they were saved by the heroism of Blucher. The French are taught that only a series of misfortunes so incredibly prolonged as to savour of the supernatural, and in any event totally beyond the range of human foresight, could have turned a victory otherwise inevitable, and even as it was all but realised, into defeat.

This subjective interpretation of history colours all our teaching, and the importance of history is insisted upon, not because it is desired to inculcate a knowledge of the facts, but because a sagacious selection of historical truth makes excellent propaganda from the point of view of the State. A proper acquaintance with the glories of his own country and the corresponding defects of every other, a rendering of the past which portrays in glowing colours the achievements of the fatherland and dwells upon the defeats and humiliations of nations which were venturesome enough to cross its path, which presents every quarrel between States as one in which justice was permanently embodied in the cause of the favoured country, while its enemies were permanently actuated by the meanest motives of cupidity, arrogance or revenge, transform these children of yours, who are to face the future enriched by the priceless knowledge of the past, into little nationalised Jingoes who are ready enough to adopt any parrot cry such as " The White Man's Burden," or " The Kultur of the Fatherland," as an excuse for extending the power of their own land over so-called backward peoples, and conscientiously pocketing the proceeds of their enterprise. It is a knowledge of history which enables them to defend such activities on the best possible grounds, and to plead national aims as a cloak for personal aggrandisement.

On analysis, then, we find that this inherited culture of the race, which it is the business of education to transmit

to the child, varies considerably according to the country to which the child happens to belong, and instead of presenting him with an agreed body of knowledge, aims at inculcating that peculiar set of facts and ideas whose dissemination among the young is advantageous to the government of the country and of the day. The result is that a man's view of the past comes to depend upon the bedroom in which he happens to have been born, and has the limited and partial characteristics which such a circumscribed environment might be expected to bestow.

In Politics, Economics and Religion.

(*b*) What is true of the teaching of history is true also of the teaching of economics, of political science, of religion, of morals, and indeed of all branches of education which involve more than a simple recital of brute fact.

If history inculcates ideas which are convenient to the Government in relation to other Governments, economics and political science are devoted to producing a mentality which is convenient to the Government in relation to its own working classes.

The comparative merits of democracy and aristocracy are urged *ad nauseam* in the essays of our public schoolboys, but they are not asked to write on Communism or to consider possible alternatives to Capitalism. The syllabus at our Universities significantly fails to provide lectures on Karl Marx, and though the French Revolution—the effects of which have been rendered innocuous by lapse of time—is seriously studied in our history schools, the Russian Revolution, which is still alive and therefore menacing, is not thought worthy of attention. Writers on political theory whose views were revolutionary a hundred years ago, like those of Rousseau or Tom Paine, are admitted ; but men like Sorel or Bertrand Russell, who have a disintegrating tendency to-day, and seek to undermine the basis of society as at present constituted, are eschewed.

Instead, therefore, of embarking upon an impartial study of politics and economics, what posterity in practice absorbs under the name of education are certain theories of economics and certain aspects of politics, namely, those theories and

aspects which make out a case for the maintenance of society on its established basis, and seek to console instead of to inflame the working classes.

Take one more department of education: education in religion, which is called divinity. Now religion is in the last resort one of a number of metaphysical theories. Metaphysics considers the ultimate constitution of the Universe: it asks whether any fundamental underlying unity can be detected or inferred behind the manifold appearances of apparently disconnected things. It may come to the conclusion, at which Kant arrived, that it is not possible for us to have knowledge of what it is that underlies the world of appearances, and that if a unity does exist, it transcends the possibilities of experience: its nature must therefore remain unknown. Or it may decide that it is possible to have such knowledge, but that the knowledge reveals not the presence but the absence of unity: that there is, in fact, nothing in the Universe except those entities which are known to science and psychology, whose existence the Universe may be made to reveal on analysis, and that any attempt to endow the Universe with unity, purpose or design, can result only in a convenient fiction founded not upon the evidence, but upon the promptings of our own desires. On this hypothesis events will proceed mechanically as a result of the operations of the law of cause and effect, or their occurrence may be a series of coincidences, the outcome of pure chance; in either event there is no meaning in the question why anything happens, since there is no reason for its happening. Or yet again, metaphysics may hold that a unity may be discerned, but only to provide us with diverse conjectures as to the nature of that unity. It may be impersonal like Bergson's *élan vital*, or personal and malignant like Goethe's god, or personal and well intentioned but limited like the god of Mr. H. G. Wells, or personal and omnipotent like the god of the theologians.

Now, where metaphysics supplies us with a multiplicity of views as to the real nature and purpose of the Universe, each of which can adduce in its support evidence which has appealed to many as convincing and to some as conclusive, what does religion do? It seizes upon one of these hypo-

theses, the hypothesis of an omnipotent, benevolent deity, and under the name of divinity instils it into the minds of the young as ascertained and unquestioned truth. The numerous other views, to some of which I have briefly referred, are either not mentioned, or are mentioned only to be treated with contempt and loathing, so that in the process of receiving the inherited culture of the race, the young mind is brought to believe that to hold any view other than the one that has been imposed upon it under the name of religion, is a heresy, a blasphemy, and a crime, of which those who are guilty are outside the pale of decent society in this world and condemned to eternal damnation in the next. Thus do our teachers supply the place of ignorance by converting the conjectures of the sages into dogmas of their own, dogmas which are used to cramp, not to enrich, the minds of their charges under the sounding title of inherited knowledge and culture.

I speak of religion as though there were but one, but how infinite are the creeds that go by that name! If the teaching of religion involves the arbitrary selection of one from a number of metaphysical hypotheses, and its erection into a dogma ready chewed for digestion by weak mental stomachs, is not the selection of one from a number of different religions equally arbitrary? Does it not involve an equally illegitimate departure from that strictly impartial communication of the inherited culture of the race which you believe it to be the object of education to undertake?

Where the wisest have doubted the existence of God, education insists that there is a God; where the most devout have disputed about His nature, quarrelled about His attributes and entertained different opinions with regard to His relations to the world and to the children, if any, He has begotten, the teaching of divinity in this and in every other civilised country asserts His character in definite terms, catalogues His attributes, and does not hesitate to affirm precise details as to His paternity and the motives with which He undertook it.

Thus the inherited culture of the race, which is transmitted under the name of divinity, assumes various and arbitrary forms, which are again found to depend upon topo-

graphical considerations. If a child is born in India, he is inoculated with the priceless heritage of the metaphysical wisdom of the past in the form of Brahminism, if in Arabia he learns Mohammedanism, if in Germany Christianity, if in China Confucianism. Nowhere is he presented with an unbiassed survey of this realm of bitter controversy, informed of the various alternatives that may be entertained, furnished with the main arguments for and against possible hypotheses, and allowed to make a free choice according to the dictates of his temperament and the weight of the evidence.

The consequence is that he holds certain creeds to be superior to others, not because he has compared them on merits, but simply because he happens to hold them, just as he regards his own nation and family as better than those of his neighbour simply because he happens to belong to them; the natural result being that the world is rent with the feuds and dissensions of those who clamorously urge the paramount superiority of the opinions they have been taught, the nation into which they have been born, the ready-made customs and codes they have assimilated, and the god they have invented. Thus, what you call the inherited culture of the past is nationalised and sectionalised to suit the private interests of parents, priests and Governments.

Mr. Banks. What would you have men taught if they are to be denied history and economics, political science and morals, and are to eschew religion like the devil?

The Teaching of Philosophy.

Anthony. Why, philosophy of course! Philosophy invites us to consider as open questions what religion crams down our throats as dogmas.

Professor Cameron. Then, if I have followed you correctly, you would look to the teaching of philosophy to transmit the culture of the race and to hand on the wisdom of the past, since you deny this function to other branches of education?

Anthony. Not at all. Your question implies a complete misunderstanding of my position. I do not believe that it is the business of education to do any of these things, and philosophy most certainly does not do them. I said above

that I entirely differ from this view of the function of education, and I am just about to indicate the second of my reasons for disagreement.

MR. BANKS. But you were saying about philosophy . . .

ANTHONY. That it transmits nothing whatever. Philosophy opens the mind; it does not fill it. It cannot be called education in the sense which Professor Cameron imparts to that word, since it tells us nothing. It does not even enrich the mind, for it conveys not the knowledge but the speculations of the past; speculations which are uniformly contradicted by those which succeed them. Philosophy is like a harrow that ploughs up the surface of the mind, and opens it to the chance of seeds that may fall from other minds and to the inspiration of its own unconscious. Philosophy does not educate us, but enables us to educate ourselves; it does not hand on the torch of others' learning, but it is a spark to set our minds ablaze. That is why philosophy, unlike many forms of study, is helpful and not obstructive to the purposes of the Life Force.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. I cannot say that I agree with you, but I should like to follow this up. Surely a knowledge of the great systems of the past, such as those of Plato and Kant, is essential to the student of philosophy; and such knowledge enriches the mind.

ANTHONY. It is not essential, but it may be useful; not for itself, you understand, but to orientate our minds, to give us our bearings as it were.

But I am not here to discuss the nature and function of philosophy, especially in the presence of my friend John, whose special province it is. I came to discuss the application of his views of the Universe to special problems. We have already digressed considerably; had I not better return to the question of education?

PROFESSOR CAMERON. Perhaps you are right, and I am anxious to hear your second argument against my theory of the function of education. But that was an interesting question you raised touching the nature of philosophy, and I should be glad to have an opportunity of discussing it further. What does your friend say?

JOHN. I am at your service at any time. Perhaps if

you and Mr. Banks are staying overnight we might go into the matter to-morrow.

MR. BANKS. Certainly we will stay; and that may be considered as settled. Perhaps Mr. Anthony will now continue what he has to say about education.

ANTHONY. I am glad that you are staying, for I suspect that I shall not come to the end of what I have to say in working out the application of the Life Force theory to-day. We have literature and art still to consider.

MR. BANKS. We can take them in our stride to-morrow if necessary, but let us return to education.

ANTHONY. Before proceeding to my second argument, I had, perhaps, better summarise briefly the position I have taken up in my first, which has, I fear, been somewhat discursive.

Summary of Preceding Arguments.

My first contention is then, that education, instead of being, as Professor Cameron would have us believe, a method of handing on to the young the inherited culture of the race and the accumulated wisdom of the past, degenerates in practice into the deliberate casting of the child's mind into a mould which is formed for the manufacture of good citizens. By a good citizen is meant, among other things, a trustworthy supporter of the State, society and the Church. I maintain that this contention is true whatever department of learning you choose to consider, whether it be history, or economics, or politics, or divinity, and that education in these subjects consists in the presentation to the child of certain dogmas with regard to God, democracy, representative government or whatever the subject may be, in the guise of established truths. With regard to these dogmas I assert two things. In the first place they are hypotheses masquerading is truths; in the second place those hypotheses only are selected, which tend to produce in the child a mental complexion convenient from the point of view of the State, conventional from that of society and orthodox from that of religion. As a consequence the teacher distorts the child's mind by presenting a partial aspect of the truth as the whole of truth, and designedly gives it a twist which will influence its outlook for the remainder of its life. I say that the teacher imposes a partial aspect of truth as a sub-

stitute for the whole of truth, but even that statement is rating the business of education too highly: it is true certainly that what you teach is partial, but equally is it true that it is not truth.

It is hypothesis hypostatised into dogma; it only pretends to be knowledge. You call this pretended knowledge the heritage of the past, when it consists of little more than the errors and speculations of the past. And here I wish to make a further point which constitutes my second main argument against your theory of education.

II. Does Agreed Knowledge Exist?

I have criticised the teaching of history, of economics, and of religion on the ground that it does not convey to the young that body of agreed knowledge, that accumulation of the wisdom of mankind's past, which, according to your view, education should convey. And I quarrel with your view of education not so much because I think it can or ought to do these things, but just in so far as I deny that such an accumulation of agreed knowledge exists. If then it does not exist, it cannot be handed on. It is, in fact, just this imposition upon mankind of the speculations of the past, as the constant, immutable and unchallenged truths of the present, which is obstructive to the purposes of the Life Force, since it leads men to accept the so-called knowledge discovered by others, instead of setting them to work to discover knowledge for themselves. Present a man with his mental furniture ready made, and he will be content to sit on it: put a man in an empty house, and he will set his wits to work to construct furniture to make it habitable, an arrangement which is superior not only because what he makes for himself is likely to suit him better than what he takes ready made from others, but because the need for continual effort and experiment will lead to an improvement in the furniture.

Professor Cameron. But surely you are not going to maintain that there are no universally accepted truths which may be safely presented to the young as truths; there is no end to the stock of human knowledge. What about Newton's law of gravitation for instance, or the date of the battle of Waterloo?

ANTHONY. Oh, if you mean facts, of course I agree; but I thought that the mere recital of brute fact had been abandoned as a theory of education long ago. I understand that we now try to form minds, not to fill them. And as for Newton and gravitation, what about Einstein and relativity?

Newton is indeed a case in point. He illustrates my position, by showing that even so called laws, which have passed for centuries unchallenged by mankind, become sooner or later open to question. But leave the world of fact and consider the world of ideas: for it is ideas which give a man his outlook on life, form his mind, mould his character and supply the content of his culture. Is there any single idea which has come down to us from the past which may pass unchallenged? Is war a good in itself, or is it good only because it imparts a bracing influence to nations enervated by excess of peace; or is perpetual peace an unqualified blessing? Is democracy the only suitable form of government for states, or does its loss in efficiency more than counterbalance its gain in political experience and expression? Is the loss of efficiency inevitable?

Or take morals. Is there an absolute standard of right and wrong? Is it sometimes right to punish, or is punishment simply a pretentious name given by spiteful people to their vengeance? Is virtue unique and valuable, or is it simply an offshoot of vanity, the habit of acting in a manner which others will praise? Is a man free to pursue his own happiness, or ought he sometimes to sacrifice it to the greatest happiness of the greatest number? Ought he always to desire this greatest happiness of the greatest number?

Or take economics. Is capitalism the only possible form of organisation for a civilised country, or can it be effectively replaced by State Socialism or even by Communism? Is the motive of social service a sufficiently powerful driving force to get the work of the world done, or must it be strengthened by the incentive of personal gain? Could people be induced to share equally, or will those of greater capacity insist on acquiring greater possessions? Should land be nationalised under the State or become parcelled out in small holdings?

These, you will agree, are fundamental questions. They are just the questions, to which the answers would naturally

form the bulk of that stock of humanity's knowledge which education should hand on to posterity, if such a stock of knowledge existed. It does not exist, and it is because it does not that education can never fulfil this function which you regard as its *raison d'être.*

PROFESSOR CAMERON. You have chosen your examples well; but you have chosen them well only in the sense that they support your position: in other words, you have chosen them unfairly. Clearly religion and politics belong to the realm of opinion and of controversy; they are not subjects on which it is possible to have certain knowledge. It is equally clear that on many subjects such knowledge is possible. You mentioned history some little time back, and historical knowledge, the knowledge, for example, of the rise and fall of the Roman Empire clearly exists. Education can instil such knowledge into the minds of the young, and familiarity with the errors of the past will assist them to avoid those errors in conducting the affairs of the future.

What is Historical Truth?

ANTHONY. I disagree again. There is no such thing as agreed, historical truth. I referred just now to the form which the teaching of history assumes in our schools, and pointed out that a partial and biassed view was presented to the children, with the object of imparting to their minds a healthy, nationalist complexion, varying in tone with the sympathies of the State to which they happen to belong.

I think you agreed with me then, that the teaching of history as I described it consisted in a subjective interpretation of fact, an interpretation of a special kind conditioned by special interests, and not in an impartial record of objective fact.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. I agreed that the teaching of history was, as a matter of practice, often of this kind, not that it must necessarily be so. What you described is a perversion of education, not education.

ANTHONY. I understand your qualification, but cannot accept it. What I now want to maintain is that the teaching of history must always and necessarily be as I described it, simply because there is no objective body of historical truth

to transmit. I am arguing, in fact, that history as education can never be radically different from history as it is taught to-day.

Let us consider for a moment of what the record of history consists. I think that on analysis what is commonly called historical truth may be found to consist of two rather different things.

(*a*) In the first place there is what we may call the historian's general impression. This general impression may be of a period, a people, an outstanding personality or an important historical event. It will be composed of a number of different factors, and will vary according to the degree of weight assigned to each of these varying factors.

In any given series of events, one historian, or it may be a school of historians, will look for the determining factor in the interplay of economic motives, the desire to obtain command of a trade route, or to acquire preferential rights in undeveloped territories, the necessity for finding fresh markets for exports, or obtaining an outlet on the sea. This kind of interpretation is very fashionable among historians to-day. Another will emphasise the element of court intrigue ; the king decides on an expedition because he desires a certain mistress ; Aspasia instigates Pericles to go to war with Sparta because the Megarians have carried off one of her favourite women. Dark forces working in the background determine the policy of the court and hence of the nation ; historians delight to pry into the darkness, and to emerge therefrom triumphant with intelligent conjecture.

Others again have a penchant for explaining foreign policy in terms of internal affairs. The Government makes war to distract men's attention from mismanagement at home ; Athens is full of unemployed seamen with revolutionary tendencies : go to war with Sparta and you will find a convenient outlet for their energies !

These and many other strands go to the making of historical truth, and the truth will vary according as one or another is judged to be of greater importance. And in giving weight to these various factors the historian will be guided by the peculiarities of his temperament and the direction of his bias. It is a commonplace that the personal

factor counts in the historian, but this commonplace is only half the truth: the truth is that the character of written history depends entirely upon the nature of the man who writes it. Instead of being a record of events, it is a record of the attitude of a man's mind to events, and that mind will select, omit, give emphasis here, belittle importance there, will even on occasions unconsciously distort, in order to present a picture which will harmonise with the writer's conception of the Universe and of man. It is not the perspective of history that provides our conception of human nature; it is our conception of human nature that makes our perspective of history.

So far I have taken as my instance a writer's general impression of a period. With regard to the character of prominent personalities, the point is too obvious to require stressing. There is no historical portrait of Julius Cæsar or of Napoleon; there is only bitter controversy, involving estimates so different that Cæsar may be represented with equal plausibility as a seer or an adventurer, Napoleon as a god or a mountebank.

This part of history then is riddled with subjectivity, and it is the major part. Strip history of its element of subjectivity and it becomes a bare record of brute fact; the second part of written history is nothing but a catalogue of names and dates. And this brings me at last to my third argument against Professor Cameron. Education, when it is not busy erecting hypotheses into dogmas, is simply a bare recital of fact.

Mr. Banks. I am sorry, but I am not sure that I follow you here. I thought that, according to your view, all education consisted of a deliberate casting of the minds of the young into a certain mould, in the interests of the various powers that be. If your account is correct, and do not please for one moment imagine that I agree with you in this, it is clearly impossible for education to consist at the same time in the transmission of brute fact. Fact does not cast a mind in any mould; it may dry it up of course, that is another thing; but to assert that in conveying to a child the information that seven times seven is forty-nine you are striving to imbue its mind with a complexion convenient to yourself, is palpably absurd.

ANTHONY. I am sorry not to have made myself clearer, for, believe me, you have not quite grasped my position. Professor Cameron asked me to apply my friend's Life Force theory to various departments of human intellectual activity. In endeavouring to do so, I ventured to define a certain type of mental activity—what I have called the academic mind—which appears to me to embody and represent all that is wrong in the attitude of savants towards reason and knowledge. The academic mind, besides typifying an erroneous attitude to the developments of the Life Force, is in itself obstructive to those developments. I then endeavoured to give illustrations of what I regarded as this erroneous attitude of the academic mind to various branches of intellectual activity, and in due course I touched on education. At this point Professor Cameron enunciated his view of the function and object of education, which was, he considered, the transmission for the benefit of the coming generation of the general body of culture and learning inherited by the race. I immediately disputed this conception which I asserted to be typical of the attitude of the academic mind, and therefore a conception peculiarly relevant to the discussion we had undertaken, and I said that I desired in particular to bring three arguments against this conception of education.

My first and second arguments consisted in pointing to the complete absence of any such body of authorised and agreed knowledge as Professor Cameron's conception of education required: in its absence all that is fundamental and important for a man's outlook upon the world is inculcated in the young in the shape of half truths and dogmatised hypotheses. But this is clearly not the whole of what passes as education in a civilised community. In addition to legends about the divine birth of Christ, myths about the White Man's Burden, prepossessions in favour of the transcendent poetry of Milton and prejudices against the bawdy mirth of Congreve, there is all that branch of education which is concerned simply with the communication of fact.

III. Education is the Inculcation of Fact.

And my third argument against Professor Cameron is simply this: that the inculcation of brute fact is no more

truly a transmission of the inherited culture and knowledge of the race than the hypostatisation of half-baked theories.

I hope to deal later, or to get John to deal later (though I am afraid my inordinate prolixity will postpone the discussion to another occasion), with the question that Professor Cameron raised in his opening remarks, the question of whether there does exist in the Universe such a thing as permanent, static fact, such that our awareness of that fact may be termed absolute knowledge ; whether, in short, there is any absolute reality except the reality of the Life Force, whose function it is continually to change.

That I think was one of the questions that you raised ?

PROFESSOR CAMERON. It was, and I hope that we may yet have an opportunity of going into it, although, as the question is one of philosophy, it will be, I presume, for your friend Mr. John to expound. Meanwhile you were saying about fact . . . ?

ANTHONY. That without prejudice to anything my friend may wish to say when he considers the metaphysical implications of his theory, I would assert that if absolute fact exists, such that our knowledge of it may be said to be absolutely and not relatively or pragmatically true, then that fact is of a trivial and irrelevant character.

It is like a skeleton which waits to be clothed with living flesh : and the living flesh that is built round the framework of fact is all that is vital, and pulsing, and thrusting, and changing. What is important and valuable can never be known to be absolutely true, just because it can never be said absolutely to exist. However, that is a long story : also it is another one.

(*b*) In considering historical truth a few moments ago, I said that it consisted of two different elements. The first I described as the historian's general impression of a period or a personage ; the second, of which alone the word truth can legitimately, if at all, be predicated, is just that collection of facts of which I am now speaking. Of such facts I grant you there may, I do not say must, be knowledge. But I want now to establish the point that true knowledge, or knowledge of fact in the sense in which I have described fact, is always trivial and unimportant : it informs you,

for example, that seven multiplied by seven makes forty-nine, or that all numbers which are so large that nobody has ever thought or can ever think of them are either odd or even, or that Nelson was shot in the breast and not in the leg, or that Henry VIII had roast beef and brussels sprouts for his dinner and sack to drink with his dinner on his forty-third birthday.

A knowledge of fact is composed of an accumulation of isolated and irrelevant truths of this kind. One knows the bare fact: of its import, of its significance, of all that gives it life and places it as it were in the scheme of history, one knows nothing and can know nothing, seeing that of significance and import one can have ideas only. Hence this world of significance is the world of controversy. Now that one has knowledge of facts of this isolated and trivial character I am not prepared to deny; and it may be that this knowledge is immutable as it is certainly partial. What I do deny is that the record of this sort of fact constitutes the inherited culture of the race, the possession of which will place the starting point of each generation in the march of progress ahead of that of its predecessor.

And this is realised, I understand, even by educationists, or at least by the more enlightened of them. It is, I believe, recognised that the mere giving of information is not education, and that a child's head is not a sort of receptacle to be stuffed with facts as we stuff a jar with jam. In my day of course it was different: the acquisition of mere knowledge was in itself an achievement, and the ability in an examination to give a correct description of the ménu of Henry VIII's birthday dinner, or of the lineage of his fourth wife, was regarded as the highwater-mark test of the efficiency of the education which the promising pupil had received.

But this idea is now, I hear, discarded. While we grew up amid a ceaseless round of paradigms, syntactical exercises, dates, lists of bays and products, and genealogical tables, the modern way is, I understand, to teach children to think and not merely to know. To teach them to think? Yes, but to teach them what to think, or how to think? You would hold the former view, Professor. "To teach them what to think" is the theory of education, in terms of which the

academic mind has thought, and taught, and formed, and warped and distorted these minds of the young, which are the most promising experiments of the Life Force, since the beginning of time.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. Yes, I must admit that I do believe that education should at any rate in part teach the young what to think! But it should not teach them all to think alike. Just as we endeavour to form a boy's character, not with the object of reducing all men to one common mould, but in order to establish for him those elementary notions of decency and good taste which he may afterwards develop in his own way in contact with the world, so there is a certain indispensable, mental equipment with which we should try to arm him for the struggle which is life. A respect for his country founded on knowledge of its history and institutions, a respect for the past based on acquaintance with its language and literature, a reverence for his own mind and body born of a study of the elementary facts of psychology and physiology, these are some of the things which education should teach. They are part of that common stock of racial knowledge to which you have so often and so contemptuously referred. You, I understand, deny that such knowledge exists: for you there are no truths that pass unchallenged, or only truths about trivial points of fact; and in passing off what you call opinion as truth you say we are cheating the young. But if there is no definite body of knowledge to be inculcated, I fail to see on what ground you criticize education for inculcating it. You cannot, in fact, have it both ways: you cannot first deny the existence of that knowledge we inherit from the past, and then deplore the attempt of education to transmit a knowledge that is non-existent, on the ground that it teaches what to think and not how to think.

ANTHONY. But don't you see that that is just my point? That is just the dilemma in which the academic mind is placed. The don seeks to instruct the undergraduate in the living truth of the past, and feels the living truth dead beneath his touch. That is the very fact that convicts the academic mind of barrenness and its achievements of futility, while serving at the same time to explain the otherwise

incomprehensible methods of study pursued at our Universities.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. I am afraid I don't quite follow.

The Subordination of Substance to Form.

ANTHONY. You will remember that at the beginning of our discussion I quoted in illustration of the workings of the academic mind, its treatment of Aristotle's theory of the function of tragedy as the purgation of pity and terror. The University teacher refused to discuss the truth of this theory: he was concerned only to indicate the views of different commentators as to Aristotle's precise meaning, the development of the theory in the writings of his followers, and the criticisms urged against it by his contemporaries and his successors.

It is an exaggeration, but an exaggeration almost pardonable, to assert that much, if not most, University teaching is of this type.

Take, for example, the treatment of English literature at the Universities. It is probable that literature cannot be taught at all. Literature was written to be enjoyed, not to be learnt. You cannot manufacture good taste, nor can you take the kingdom of beauty by storm.

But what passes for the teaching of literature is analogous to what passes for the teaching of philosophy: we learn not literature, but the history of literature, which is about as irrelevant to literature itself as the knowledge of the origin of your breakfast sausage is irrelevant or even detrimental to its enjoyment.

Just as our instinctive question about a philosophy, "Is it true?" is answered by the information that Spinoza adopted it with modifications from Descartes, so does our natural question about literature, "Is it a great play?" provoke the news that Shakespeare obtained the plot from Webster, four of the characters from Lyly or was it Kyd, and the setting from Peele or was it Greene? The teaching of literature is dogged from first to last with this chatter about sources and origins: with conjectures as to whether A borrowed X from B or from C; with estimates of the possible influence of P over Q, and a careful examination of M's text with a

microscope with a view to discovering possible debts to N. All this is embedded in a mass of gossip about the lives and personalities of writers. We are informed of the public appointments held by Fielding, the financial operations of Peacock, the love affairs of George Sand, as if a knowledge of the episodes in the life of a genius were essential to an appreciation of his work, or as if the genius himself were anything more than a sort of glorified fountain pen for transmitting the inspiration of the Life Force to humanity. Nobody cares to know the make of the fountain pen with which Shaw wrote "Candida"!

And the result of this concentration on the part of our lecturers on the mechanism of literature, this unhealthy insistence by examiners that students should be able to take the machine to pieces and to demonstrate how the wheels go round, is not only to create a fictitious interest in the machinery, but to cause this fictitious interest to usurp the rightful interest in literature as such.

It is a commonplace that excess of divinity and churchgoing in youth poisons the Bible for us in manhood; yet the number of those for whom the plays of Shakespeare have been ruined by the geological investigations they were compelled to make at school into the strata of their texts, can scarcely be less. For to many of us have the great names of English literature come to symbolise tedium and dulness, not because of any intrinsic defect in our own taste, but because of the improper treatment to which we were compelled to subject these writers when we were young.

Take a thing of beauty to pieces and examine its works, and you destroy the beauty. Vivisect the works of genius in the interest of sources and influences, and the genius will escape you. You must not go behind the scenes of greatness. No wise man is a valet to his hero. Thank heaven I was saved from this. I can appreciate Shakespeare and George Elliot because I was allowed to read them at my own time, in my own way and for my own purposes. Those who have not had a classical training are less fortunate. For this indeed is the greatest though the least recognised advantage of a classical education, that by concentrating your attention in youth upon literature of little importance, it gives you

no chance of ruining your taste for the masterpieces of great literature by attacking them before you are ready for them; the classics, in fact, prevent premature consumption from spoiling your appetite for the best, by the device of feeding your immature stomach on the second best.

But I digress.

MR. BANKS. I am afraid you do. I fail to see the relevance of this diatribe on the classics.

ANTHONY. In introducing the classics I was perhaps going a little beyond my brief. But my reference to the teaching of the history of philosophy and literature was deliberate. For do you not see that these lectures on sources and influences and continuity are instances of the most striking character of that subordination of substance to form, which I began by citing as the chief characteristic of the academic mind? The poems of Wordsworth, we are agreed, were meant to be read as a whole and enjoyed as a work of art: analyse them for the pleasure of spotting the influence of the Graveyard school, and what you have done is to lose your pleasure in the substance because of your interest in the form.

And why does the academic mind instinctively act like this? Why does it display this indifference to the substance of truth, while it concentrates upon the forms which truth happens to have assumed? Because the very process of trying to capture and preserve a vital thought or a living work of art, of embalming it, as it were, to treasure as a possession for all time, kills the life that is in it; so that for the conscientious transmitter to posterity there remains only the empty vessel that held the vital essence. The vitality that gave it value has passed elsewhere.

Value is Derived from the Life Force and is Relative.

MR. BANKS. There is left, in fact, the form and nothing else.

ANTHONY. Exactly, you have caught my idea at last. The form is transmitted because the substance has gone. And why has the substance gone? Because the value of a thought or a work of art, being derived from the Life Force, is relative to the immediate purpose which the Force has

in view, and perishes when that purpose is served. Thus, in treasuring and transmitting the thought of the past, we treasure and transmit what is no longer alive.

I am afraid I have travelled a long way round in the endeavour to present this conclusion. I have done so because it did not exist ready made in my own mind, and when Professor Cameron asked me to apply the Life Force theory to the various departments of human activity, I had to grope my way as I went, and starting at haphazard with education, to travel the path that led from it back to the Life Force. But now that the journey has been accomplished and the chain of reasoning, after many stragglings and turnings, has been linked up at both ends, I wish, if you will allow me, to draw attention to two links in particular, and by putting upon them the strain of further examination to test their strength.

The Genesis and Purpose of New Thought.

(1) In the first place let us consider the initial link in this chain of connection ; initial, that is, from the Life Force end. The Life Force, we say, manifests itself primarily in the inspiration of genius, in the works of great writers and in the creations of great artists, which are thrown up from time to time by the Force to act as signposts pointing the road along which humanity is required to travel. The value then of any work of art, which we call great, or of any thought or system of which mankind says that it is true, is relative. Don't express your disapproval, now I beg of you, Professor. Of the special sense in which truth and beauty are relative we are to speak more fully at our next meeting. For the moment let me assume the strength of this particular link which belongs after all to quite another chain.

This value, then, is relative in the sense that it is dependent upon the extent to which the work of art, system of philosophy, or discovery of science does or does not achieve for mankind a step forward in its evolution to the goal, which marks the fulfilment of the purposes of the Life Force. When that step has been taken, the particular work of genius in question has accomplished the purpose for which it was created. The Life Force has no further use for it, and it may sink into

oblivion. In a sense, of course, the thought is still true, just as in a sense the beauty is still there; but, once their part has been played, the truth has lost its value, the beauty its significance.

Now, the whole course of human evolution, since first humanity learned to read and write and the arts came to be developed, is strewn with the dèbris of these disused ideas. The products of past genius are like suits of clothes which humanity has discarded because it has outgrown them. And because their beauty has lost its utility and their thought its message, the Life Force has left them behind. Mankind has learnt, or has refused to learn what there was to learn, in the words of Christ, in the thought of Plato, in the music of Beethoven, and from the point of view of the Life Force these things have no longer significance.

MR. BANKS. One moment, please: has Christ no message for the world to-day?

ANTHONY. No! For the world will not listen to it: it never would. Christ is an experiment that failed. The Life Force threw Him up too early, that is to say, before the world was ready for Him. And the world which rejected His teaching when it was living now uses it as lumber to block the way to the acceptance of new truth. All greatness endures only for a space. The unresting power which ceaselessly urges forward the wheels of evolution throws up new men of genius, new artists, new writers and new thinkers, whose business it is to reveal to humanity a further stage of the journey that lies before it, and to direct a new attack upon the passive resistance of nothingness and chaos. For a time the words of these men will have value and significance, which are what men call greatness. That time will endure so long as their work has a message for mankind, which expresses the will and purpose of the Force; when that message has been delivered their time will be past, their greatness will fade, and though men still call them great the name will be a convention and not a reality.

Its Reception by the Academic Mind.

Now it will be obvious that anything which distracts men's attention from the emergence of new thought, thought which

contains, as it were, a further instalment of the Life Force's message, will be retarding its comprehension and acceptance by mankind and delaying the progress of evolution. Equally obstructive will be an attitude of mind which insists on regarding the works which humanity has outgrown as vital and significant, and diverts the attention of the young from what is new and living to what is old and disused, on the ground that the inherited culture of the race must be transmitted. For the inherited culture of the race is nothing but the accumulated refuse of the past, a sort of permanent second-hand clothes shop, in which are stored all the mental garments which humanity has outgrown. And it is the academic mind which, poking among this flotsam and jetsam of the past, picks out this or that suit, furbishes it up and insists on pressing it upon our notice, on the ground that works of art possess a glory which is immutable and transcendent, and are therefore as worthy of the admiration of mankind to-day as on the day which gave them birth.

(2) And it is here that I am seeking to test the second important link in my chain, by demonstrating that the character and methods which education has assumed to-day are directly derivable from a fundamental misunderstanding of the nature of the Life Force and of its purpose.

Let me briefly summarise my reasons for asserting that education, as you conceive it, cannot be other than it is. I spoke just now of the tendency of lecturers and teachers to direct attention not to the intrinsic merits of the system under discussion, but to its relations with other systems, its origins, and its subsequent modifications.

Why this tendency? Because these great systems of the past, having by the mere progress of evolution fulfilled their mission, have lost both driving power and significance. They are not living but dead, and any attempt to infuse life into the corpse by conjuring up interest in the ideas that once held the world is doomed to failure. We are left then with two things: with the recital of mere fact, and with the external form which the thought when living assumed.

The recital of mere fact constitutes the bulk of history; it furnishes us also with lectures of the type which informs us that Plato divided the soul into three different parts, and

asserted that education should consist both of music and gymnastics.

The insistence on form is the starting point of those interminable discussions as to what A thought of B, what were the sources of A's thought, and how A was criticised by C, so that for the enquiry which was once alive, namely, how far are Aristotle's teachings true, we are asked to consider what is the relation of Aristotle's teachings to his age, to Plato or to humanity. This enquiry is beside the point. The Life Force produced Aristotle in order that he might convey its promptings to humanity, and to his contemporaries it was a matter of burning moment to ask, " What has this fellow got to say to me ? " But that question is meaningless now. To the twentieth century student Aristotle has nothing to say, and for that very reason his lecturer has to content himself with conveying information as to the sources from which he obtained his remarks. He has, in fact, to concentrate on the form of Aristotle, because the substance of Aristotle has fled.

The Effect upon the Teacher and the Race.

But this is not the end of the story. This perverted attitude into which the teacher is driven towards the giants of the past reacts unfavourably upon the teacher himself. If you systematically assert that what is dead and meaningless has value and significance, your self-respect will sooner or later impose upon you the belief that it *has* value and significance. Concentrate perforce upon form when substance is lacking, and form will come to you to seem more important than substance wherever it is found. Spend your days among mummies, and something of the mummy will enter into yourself. In other words, your mind will inevitably become academic from the character of the material with which it deals.

Thus the habit of teaching and lecturing on the things of the past, which are things of no significance, will affect your attitude to the things of the present. You will lose your grip on life : existence will have no meaning for you, or it will have at best a second-hand meaning of the kind

provided for inert minds, by the numerous associations and societies for the preservation of ancient hypotheses as valuable truths.

For these systems and theories, which you know so well and which you have erected into such tremendous importance, will stand between you and the ready reception of what is new. This knowledge of the past, this culture of the race that you seek to transmit to others, will, like a pair of coloured, mental spectacles, darken your view of life, blind you to the purposes for which the Life Force created you, and distort the impulses by which it prompts you. Ideas about the world will come to you ready-made, culled from the museum of the past. The wealth of knowledge and culture which you have made your own, like an intellectual big store, a sort of Selfridge's of ideas, will provide you with a ready-made, intellectual equipment to suit your temperament and your interests. But the man whose training and education has presented him with his mental outfit ready-made, will not find it necessary to set his mind to work to discover a meaning in life for himself.

You spoke of education at the beginning of our discussion, as enabling each generation to begin the pursuit of knowledge and the journey of evolution where its predecessor left off. It was to build upon foundations already laid and by so doing to render progress possible. Yet if my view may claim to be more than the vapourings of a disgruntled outsider, it would seem that the effect of education is almost exactly the contrary.

By substituting a knowledge of the past for an interest in the present it leads to mental incuriosity and stagnation: by instilling an exaggerated respect for the achievements of our predecessors, it creates a prejudicial attitude to the experiments of our contemporaries; by providing us with a ready-made attitude to the world, it saves us the trouble of defining one for ourselves. Hence the academic mind is incurious, unprogressive and reactionary; every new branch of study, every new science, can only establish itself in the teeth of its opposition. Look at the past struggle of psychology, look at the present struggle of investigators into the unconscious to obtain any foothold at our seats of learning.

Why experiment, why trouble to open up new avenues of study? Is it not all to be found in Plato?

Such is the attitude of the academic mind to those continual thrustings of the Life Force which impel men to question, to criticise and finally to reject, the standards and knowledge of the past, that they may themselves point the way to the vision of the future; such is the attitude of hostility to what is new and the undue veneration for what is old, which make of this type of mind the chief obstruction to the purposes of the Force, as they are expressed in the sphere of intellect.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. And does this conclude your application of the Life Force theory to the principles of education?

ANTHONY. It does. I have indicated in what way the leading ideas of education, as education is conceived to-day, are antagonistic to the purposes of evolution, and how the academic mind, which is for me the epitome of the attitude of the educational world, has set its face definitely in the wrong direction!

PROFESSOR CAMERON. Yes, you have indicted education as it is, and demonstrated in what way it falls short of some ideal to which your metaphysical views direct you. You have endeavoured to shatter my conception of the function of education, and I have to thank you for an interesting exposition by which I have nevertheless been not altogether convinced. In short, you have told me what education ought not to be. You have not even hinted at what it should be.

Education as a Process of Self-revelation.

ANTHONY. That, of course, is another story And it is one on which I have surprisingly little to say.

You will remember that I summarised the opposition between your view of education and mine by the remark that you held that education should teach what to think, while I, on the contrary, believed that it should teach how to think. But there are no rules for teaching how to think: such teaching must, in fact, be different in each case. A child's mind is an experiment, an experiment on the part of the Life Force, and it should be allowed to claim the right of every experiment, the right of developing on its own lines.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. But you must teach it something;

if you do not, each generation of children will start where its predecessors started: the civilised child will have no advantage over the savage. Why perpetuate the repetition of the errors of the past, when a little instruction will enable the child to avoid them? Surely a child should reap the benefits won by the experience of its ancestors.

JOHN. But has it not those benefits already, Professor Cameron, even without the advantages of an academic education? Does it not possess the benefits not only of the lives of the past but of its own past lives? I am afraid, Mr. Banks, that you cannot have recounted to Professor Cameron the full tale of M. Geley's heresies, some of which, you will remember, I adopted as my own.

MR. BANKS. I thought I had omitted nothing. I took full notes, and I told Professor Cameron of M. Geley's belief that each of us lives a number of successive lives.

JOHN. Ah, but there is more in it than that! M. Geley, you will remember, insisted on the complete interpenetration of the conscious and the unconscious as a cardinal point in his system. There is constant interchange and communication between the two, so that, while the unconscious on the one hand influences the conscious in reverie and day-dream after the manner known to psychoanalysts, the conscious is continually engaged in transmitting its own acquisitions to the unconscious. All conscious memories and impressions are stored away in the unconscious; all acquisitions of knowledge, of power, or of special skill are transmitted from the conscious to the unconscious.

Thus, not only does the unconscious contain a complete record of the development of each single life, but it is enriched with the various, conscious acquisitions of each successive life. The acquisitions of the one life become the innate faculties of the next, and the unconscious, which remains unaffected by death, and is continuous through a number of successive lives, advances in each to a higher stage of development, and enriches each successive conscious with more and more well-developed faculties from its constantly increasing store of acquisitions from the last conscious.

Now bearing in mind this theory of M. Geley's, a theory by no means unsupported by evidence, and assuming for

the moment that it is correct in what it asserts, consider whether it will not profoundly affect our view of education.

MR. BANKS. How does it do that, pray?

ANTHONY. Because it reduces education very largely to a question of self-revelation. If all the acquisitions of your previous lives are stored in your unconscious, it is enough for your conscious to become aware of them. Professor Cameron, anxious that each generation should not lose the advantage over its predecessors which a knowledge of the accumulated learning of the past would bestow, regards education primarily as a means for conveying that knowledge. But, if M. Geley is right, that knowledge is, in a sense, already stored within us. So far from starting with a clean slate, we possess in our unconscious a tablet covered with the writings that our past experiences have inscribed; and if we would put ourselves in possession of the knowledge of the past, we should read it not in books but within ourselves.

The Greeks, with their usual uncanny prescience of future developments, hinted at this conclusion. They insisted that man's chief object in life was "to know himself," and "γνῶθι σεαυτὸν" might perhaps be accounted the watchword of education, as the theory of the Life Force requires us to conceive it.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. Education is then for you simply a branch of psychology. We have to learn to know ourselves, or rather our own unconscious selves, and no other key is necessary to unlock for us all the doors of the treasure house of the past.

ANTHONY. I do not say that no other key is necessary. I think that my friend John only introduced this reference to M. Geley and to his conception of the unconscious, because he wished to show that, even were education, as popularly conceived, to be entirely eliminated, it would nevertheless be unnecessary for each generation to traverse again the steps taken by its predecessors.

But it does not necessarily follow that we should disdain such assistance as education may proffer. Reading, writing, arithmetic and certain elementary facts, are the necessary instruments for the acquisition of new knowledge, and should be insisted upon. The purpose of literature, for instance,

is to reveal us to ourselves ; but we must learn to read before we can enjoy literature.

For the rest, let us present ideas as hypotheses and not as dogmas ; history as interpretation and not as fact ; political science and economics as political propaganda and not as ascertained truth ; religion as mysticism and not as sense ; and let us suffer the mind of the young man to find its way among the intellectual tangle that humanity pretentiously calls its knowledge as best it may. This is what education might do !

It is not much, you think ? It is better, at any rate, than that choice of mental outlook arbitrarily imposed by others from without, which masquerades under the title of education to-day. Such a choice, just because it is not self-made, warps the mind, and turns it from the course it was created to pursue.

CHAPTER IV

THE LIFE FORCE IN LITERATURE AND ART

Introduction.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. I find you on the whole an entertaining talker, Mr. Anthony, and although your application of your friend's theories is at times a little strained and crude, it makes up, I find, in verve what it lacks in perspective. I am hoping to-day that you will continue to apply.

ANTHONY. I am at your service, but I am not a phonograph to play to order. The subject you propose may not interest me, or it may be outside my compass, or again I may not be in a mood for talk. What would you have me discuss, or apply as you call it ?

PROFESSOR CAMERON. The subject is your own, for it is the same subject as that which we discussed last time. You then sought to demonstrate the somewhat peculiar view of education which the Life Force metaphysic apparently requires. I now want you to apply that same metaphysic to literature and to art. Does not the subject interest you ?

ANTHONY. It does, but I may not be in the mood ; words may be wanting.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. Our previous conversation leads me to regard such a contingency as unlikely. Most of us have to whistle for the breath of utterance ; but you, I should say, must be more concerned to get out of the draught.

ANTHONY. I thank you for the compliment. Where shall we begin ?

PROFESSOR CAMERON. You will remember that we began to discuss yesterday the nature of knowledge and learning. I held that it was permanent and changeless ; you sought to show that the knowledge of each age was relative to the purposes of that age, valuable, that is, only for a time. In

the course of a few remarks in which I stated my view, I suggested that your Life Force hypothesis appeared to involve the belief that the value of Shakespeare's work diminished as our distance from Shakespeare increased. I enquired whether you really took this view; but though you did indeed affirm it as regards our knowledge of ideas, you avoided giving a definite answer with regard to our appreciation of the products of the imagination. Do you then hold that art and beauty, that music, poetry and the drama are also relative and ephemeral, and that their value passes as their message, if message they have, wins home? If this is the case, art is reduced to the level of journalism: Christ, who taught us much, is an artist instead of a preacher, while Jane Austen, who taught us nothing, is not an artist at all. Is this really your view? If it is, how do you propose to support so outrageous an attitude; if it is not, the theory of the Life Force must be held to fail to give a consistent account of the phenomena of art and literature

ANTHONY. That is an awkward dilemma you propound: either the value of Shakespeare diminishes as time proceeds, or, you say, my theory fails to account for Shakespeare. Well, if I must choose, I must confess I choose the former alternative; but I agree that the assertion of the progressive decline of Shakespeare's greatness is a little startling. It wants support. And so I think I had better set to work and explain the theory of art, which seems to me to follow from the Life Force metaphysic, without more ado.

And to-day I shall propose to follow a somewhat different method from that adopted in yesterday's rather wandering discussion. You will remember that my own theory of education emerged late; I felt my way to it, as it were, through many digressions, and I described at length the prevalent contrasting view, the view of the academic mind, to throw my own into relief. In the course of the digressions I touched frequently upon the nature of genius, including literary greatness, as I conceived it, and you will already be familiar with my general point of view. I can therefore begin to-day with an immediate statement of my own conception of the purpose and function of the artist, and proceed to amplify and defend it later in the light of such criticisms as you may

wish to bring. Needless to say my view is once again in opposition to that of the academic mind; but as regards the latter, even if you do not chance to state it yourself, I have no doubt that I shall have occasion to enlarge on the wrong attitude to art and literature in order the more clearly to bring out my own.

Does the method I propose recommend itself to you?

PROFESSOR CAMERON. By all means! State your theory, and I shall no doubt find cause for disagreement. But my views are not startling, and, as it is difficult to make orthodoxy interesting, I should prefer correcting you to being correct myself.

ANTHONY. I have one more preliminary observation to make. I have referred somewhat indiscriminately to art and to literature, to the artist and to the writer, and in the last resort I believe that what I shall say of the one will hold true of the other. If all great men are primarily teachers, it matters little whether they convey their message through words, music or paint. But I have little knowledge of the arts, and the examples I take will be drawn primarily from the realm of literature, just as my theory will appear more readily applicable to literature.

But please understand that when I speak indiscriminately of the artist, the thinker, the writer, the prophet, the man of genius, and so forth, I do mean one and the same person: a person thrown up by the Life Force in order to reveal to man the purposes of the Force, and to increase man's consciousness of himself.

The Life Force Theory of Art.

This remark brings me at once to the statement of my theory.

The artist, as I say, is created by the Life Force for a special purpose. This purpose is to bring new ideas into the world. These ideas have a threefold function, each function being part of the same purpose. In the first place they indicate to mankind the direction in which the Life Force desires evolution to proceed. In the second they enrich and develop the intellect which grasps them. On this point I may say at once that the object of developing

man's intellect is to improve his efficiency as an instrument, by making him quicker to grasp and readier to achieve those purposes of Life which, at his present stage of evolution, he so often thwarts in virtue of his possession of Free Will. In the third place they increase man's consciousness of himself by revealing to him his own nature: in so doing they diminish the area of unconsciousness in the Universe, and help forward that complete merging of the unconscious into consciousness which M. Geley, you will remember, regarded as the ultimate aim of his universal dynamo-psychism.

The artist then is in essence a purveyor of ideas. The germ of these ideas is communicated to his unconscious by the Life Force in the form of what is called inspiration. The artist is unaware of the source of this inspiration because he does not know what is taking place in his unconscious; what he is aware of are certain ideas, accompanied by a desire to express them, which appear in consciousness. To these ideas he immediately seeks to give concrete form in the medium which he finds most suitable to himself. Through all this process the artist is little more than an instrument. He is in the grip of something greater than himself, and he must do its will whether he likes it or not. He knows not what he will create, and he knows not why he creates it: he is in fact impelled by a push from behind, not drawn from in front by the pull of some consciously conceived object or ideal. The artist then may, if you will pardon the expression, be defined as, "a person to whose hind-quarters the boot of the Life Force is permanently applied."

PROFESSOR CAMERON. I pardon the expression, but surely it should be amended to read "spasmodically"; the artist is not always creating.

ANTHONY. I accept the emendation. Having established the maxim that art is essentially didactic and propagandist, I have now to account for the phenomenon of what is known as beauty. I understand that my friend John indulged in some highly metaphysical speculations on the subject of beauty when discoursing alone with Mr. Banks. He places it, I believe, in the heaven of complete consciousness to which the Life Force aspires, with truth and goodness somewhere in attendance. For the present I propose to leave such

inviting speculations out of account, and to consider the place and purpose of the beauty of works of art.

There is, as you know, an age-long controversy between those who believe in art for art's sake and those who do not. The former hold that the beauty of a work of art is its sole *raison d'être*, the only factor of which an appraisement of the value of that work should take account. As for meaning, it is only valuable as being in some way an integral part of the beauty of the whole. The latter believe that other factors besides beauty contribute value; but I am not clear that they would all agree with me in holding that the real alternative to art for art's sake is art for propaganda's sake. Beauty in fact is for me nothing more than a contrivance of the Life Force for securing that its ideas shall win acceptance. It is the sugar on the pill; suck the sugar, and you swallow the pill: yield to the glamour of the lyric, and your mind will absorb the thought behind it. Taste, to continue the metaphor, is the appreciation of the sugar by the person swallowing the pill.

The element of beauty will, of course, vary with the nature of the work that it enshrines. Great works may be composed of the ingredients of beauty and propaganda in very different degrees. At one end of the scale you have the purely didactic teacher, preacher or reformer, who serves out his message hot and strong and disdains the adventitious aids to popular favour which an admixture of beauty would confer. Such artists there are, but they are few: Socrates dispensed with beauty, and so I think does Einstein; but as a rule the innovator, whether in thought or morals, clothes his teaching, as did Christ in His parables, with poetry, with the play of the imagination, or it may be of wit, and the beauty of form. At the other end of the scale you have the lyric poet, the pictorial artist and the musician, whose message is so difficult to disentangle from the sensuous beauty of the vehicle that conveys it, as to induce many critics to embrace the erroneous view that beauty is an end in itself, and that it is the business of art to create beauty. I am dogmatically stigmatising this view as erroneous because I am at the moment stating my own theory, without seeking to defend it or to criticise alternative views. Speaking generally, however, I should

say that the works of art in which the didactic element is apparently small and the element of beauty, whether of form or of sound, is large, fulfil the second and third of the functions to which I referred just now, instead of subserving the purposes of the Life Force by the more direct method of presenting to the world new ideas. That is to say, the arts of painting, of music and of lyrical poetry deepen and enrich human consciousness by sharpening and refining the senses, and, by means of the feelings which they arouse, reveal to us a deeper knowledge of our natures. Even in these cases, however, beauty is to be regarded not so much as the end to which the work of art aspires, or as the criterion by which it should be judged, as the method of its appeal. It is because men are attracted and ensnared by the beauty of art that they are brought to undergo the self-abnegation which the continual refining of taste, and the pain which the revealing of the self, involve. What I have said about beauty I believe also to be true of literary merit, whether it be interpreted as charm of style, appropriateness of diction, vivacity of wit, or whatever else in the way of literary grace you care to name. My view then, in short, is that it is the business of the artist to be a teacher : it is his function to give conscious expression to the instinctive promptings of the Life Force.

It follows that all first-rate artists will be found to have brought into the world new thoughts and ideas which, in the long run, have profoundly changed the convictions and conduct of men.

Euripides foreshadowed a new morality : he treated women as human beings ; Ibsen a changed attitude to domestic relationships ; Shaw to marriage. Hardy has profoundly modified our conception of God, and Blake, if we would but read him, would produce an equivalent modification in our conception of virtue. Dickens taught the importance of kindness, Bunyan of humility, Samuel Butler of irreverence : so the list might be indefinitely continued.

While the first-rate artist brings new ideas into the world, or emphasises new aspects of old ones, it is the characteristic of the second-rate artist to reflect the ideas of others, polishing them incidentally in the process of presenting them in a new dress. Shakespeare, I am afraid, on my conception, is for

the most part only a good second-rater: he dealt in the stock of ideas current in his day and added to them not at all; and so, if I may end my statement with a reply to one of your questions, I should answer that the question of whether Shakespeare's Life Force value diminishes by the mere lapse of time does not arise, since Shakespeare's Life Force value was always pretty much of a negligible quantity.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. You certainly possess the audacity of your logic; but see into what absurd heresies it leads you. I pay you the compliment of assuming that your estimate of Shakespeare is not merely an expression of that fashionable attitude of condescension to the past and to the greatest figure of the past which Shaw, I think, initiated. I pay you the compliment, I say, of believing that you make this assertion perforce, because you find that it follows logically from your theory. And I think that it does: with your logic I have no quarrel; but what a commentary on the theory! And if your premises lead you to such a demonstrably absurd conclusion, does it not suggest the reflection that there may be something wrong with the premises?

ANTHONY. Do you really think the conclusion so absurd?

PROFESSOR CAMERON. Indeed I do. Shakespeare was one of the greatest geniuses of all times.

ANTHONY. And you are sure that your strictures spring from a genuine conviction of my absurdity, and not from a feeling of shock at my literary blasphemy! Please have the courage to avow it, if it is the latter feeling: I shall not mind. To feel shocked is quite a harmless form of self-indulgence.

The Academic View of Art.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. My feelings of complete disagreement might perhaps be partly analysed into what you call shock, were it not for the fact that they have been more or less actively aroused by the whole tenor of your remarks. You will not be surprised, I think, to hear that in my opinion you fundamentally misconceive the whole purpose and effect of artistic and literary production.

When we talk of the value or truth of a work of art we are using the words value and truth in a very special sense,

a sense which is distinct from that in which these words are used in, let us say, science or mathematics. This distinction I think you overlook. Let me try to explain in a little more detail what I mean.

You are, of course, aware of the well-worn difficulty which centres round the question of whether the value of art is objective or subjective: Has the Round Madonna in the National Gallery objective value in its own right, or does its value arise from the circumstance of its being appreciated? Would the picture, in fact, be beautiful if there were no minds to appreciate its beauty? Would Bach's Preludes and Fugues have value if there were none to hear them? These are old questions and there are many answers to them. We may hold the purely objective view and assert roundly that the intrinsic qualities of a work of art remain unaffected by the presence or absence of human appreciation, or we may hold with Tolstoy that the value of a work of art depends entirely upon its capacity for rousing emotion in those to whom it is presented. Between the extreme objective and the extreme subjective view there are a number of intermediate theories. Whatever view we take of the matter, however, we must, I think, admit that works of art are in fact judged by mind in accordance with certain standards, and that whether these standards have objective validity or whether they are themselves the product of human intelligence, we all recognise that they are final, at any rate for human judgment. That such standards exist and that they have this kind of finality we may agree, although we may differ as to their exact character and application. We do know broad differences in value, however much we may dispute about the merits of a particular picture or poem, and it is in virtue of this knowledge that we unhesitatingly proclaim Hardy the superior of Eleanor Glyn and Mozart of Mendelssohn although we cannot perhaps define exactly what we mean by the word superior when we use it.

All I am trying to establish at the moment, you will understand, is that the conception of value or quality as applied to works of art does exist for us, although we may differ as to the precise meaning of the conception. I propose, if you will allow me, to denominate this particular

kind of value which exists in works of art as artistic truth.

Now although, as I say, we may not know what artistic truth means, there are two things which we may unhesitatingly affirm with regard to it.

In the first place it possesses the characteristic of permanence. By this characteristic it is chiefly distinguished from other kinds of truth, such as scientific truth. With regard to scientific truth it may be, as you say, that it is relative and changing. Personally I should say that it is provisional and partial, provisional in the sense that any scientific truth may be overturned or modified by subsequent discovery, partial in the sense that, since it is not the whole truth about the Universe, it must always remain liable to modification and amplification by other aspects of truth not yet conceived; on my view, therefore, though I am not pressing this at the moment, scientific truth is not wholly true just because it is not wholly complete in what it asserts. It will at any rate be admitted, that the scientific truth of the past is modified and superseded by the discoveries of the present: pre-Darwinian biology was rendered practically worthless by the work of the later nineteenth century, and the science of medicine before Harvey was rendered nugatory by his discovery of the circulation of the blood. Even in the comparatively static realm of mathematical physics the truth of Newton has, I understand, been largely put out of court by the truth of Einstein.

Now the quality of artistic truth is radically different. We feel that the value of a work of art is permanent, in the sense that it cannot be destroyed, superseded or amplified by anything that comes after it. The form, the mode of expression may belong to the past, but the substance of the artistic truth belongs to a world which is independent of time and space. The value of Sophocles does not diminish because Shakespeare wrote after him: the statues of Pheidias are not superseded because the sculpture of Rodin is also beautiful. Thus the creations of great art may be multiplied indefinitely without any one of them destroying or diminishing by competition the value of any other.

Take, for instance, the case of the pictorial artist. For

the excellence of a picture it is immaterial whether its object ever existed, or whether the object, if it does exist, has been correctly reproduced: and the value of the picture, being independent of the world of fact, is not affected by the changes that take place in that world. Consider the novelist. It is the business of the novelist neither to copy the world as he sees it, nor yet to spin an unreal world out of his imagination; but, starting from the world of fact, to destroy that world by selection, emphasis, omission and rearrangement, and to recreate from it an ideal world, which is a closer embodiment of the essential reality of life than any world of actually living people can ever hope to be. This ideal world of the novelist is also independent of and unaffected by changes in the world of so-called fact, which we know through the medium of our senses. Artistic truth then is permanent and changeless.

In the second place artistic truth possesses the character of uniqueness. Its value is qualitative and not quantitative. By this I mean, among other things, that every work of art which has artistic truth is incomparable and unanalysable. And herein consists a further distinction of artistic truth from other kinds of truth.

In the case of mathematical and scientific truth we can compare the value of different theories or hypotheses, just because that value can be tested and expressed quantitatively. Thus when the mathematician eliminates counting as an adequate basis for number, and substitutes for it the notion of classes of similar collections arranged serially, he has made a definite advance in quantitative truth. He has, in fact, attained to a more completely general conception of truth, which includes the former general truth as one special aspect of itself. Thus subject matter with which mathematics and science deal is quantitative and not qualitative. The neutral particulars which are at the basis of modern physics, the integers with which the arithmetician counts, the symbols which the algebraist employs are all qualitatively the same: their differences are differences of order and arrangement: they are confined to the world of more or less. The result is that, just as you can compare and measure one mathematical formula against another, so

you can arrange serially for the purposes of comparison and measurement the objects with which they deal.

With artistic truth this is not so: and it is not so, just because artistic truth is concerned with differences of quality and not of quantity. You know that Sophocles is great and that Shakespeare is great, but you cannot measure them one against another to discover which is the greater. The charm of Mozart defies analysis, so does the majesty of Beethoven; you cannot attempt to resolve the one into the other, to find a common factor between them, or to specify which embodies the greater quantity of artistic truth.

Now these two characteristics of permanence and uniqueness which distinguish the world of art and literature, constitute an element which, in the brief sketch you gave of your theory you appeared to me entirely to neglect. This is the more curious, since almost all theories of art with which I am acquainted recognise that it is a fact to be taken into account, in whatever way they may attempt to explain it.

The explanation which is best known is, of course, that which Plato provides in his theory of Forms. He is endeavouring in this theory to account for that sense of being in touch with a permanent and unchanging reality, with something stable and perfect behind and beyond the kaleidoscope of fleeting and contradictory appearances known to us through our senses, with which we are all familiar in the presence of great art. He held, as you know, that, in some unexplained way, some essence from the world of immutable reality took shape and embodied itself in the works of great artists, and was at once the cause and the substance of the beauty of their work. In so far as any work could claim to be great, its claim must stand or fall according to the presence or absence in it of this hint of the real world that is behind and beyond. And since the greatness of any work of art is contingent upon this showing forth in it of that which is real and immutable, that greatness, such as it is, must itself partake of the changeless nature of that to which it owes its being. Artistic value is permanent then because, where it is present, reality itself is glimpsed: and reality, as opposed to the fleeting appearances which imperfectly shadow it forth, is eternally one and eternally constant. Artistic value is

unique because reality is unique, and the essence of the real, which is the source of greatness, cannot be analysed into anything other than itself. Since, moreover, reality cannot be more real than itself, we cannot say of any one work of art that is really great, that its value is more than that of another.

And this account of Plato's is in harmony not only with the quality of artistic value or truth, but with the quality that attaches to the appreciation of it. The sense of finality and of quiescence that characterises æsthetic contemplation, the emancipation from self that is achieved, produce for the moment a feeling of selflessness in the observer that is akin to the nature of the beauty before him. His thoughts and feelings are lifted up out of the little festering pit of vanity and strife and desire that is himself, and while the contemplation persists, become merged in the all-pervasive and changeless reality which is contemplated. To glimpse the real is to become merged therein. That the vision does not last, that it fades as soon as we regain the consciousness of self, is but one more proof, if proof were wanted, that as Plato puts it, we are but shadows in a world of shadows, whose access to the world of reality lies through beauty in art and thought in philosophy.

It is not necessary that we should accept in its entirety this view of Plato's, which is as it were the loom from which I have woven the thread of my remarks; it has its own difficulties, as you are, no doubt, aware: but it nevertheless is necessary to adopt a view which, like his, makes provision for this quality of permanence in beauty, and of self-forgetfulness in the contemplation of beauty.

These, then, are the points which I desire to establish in opposition to your view. First, that the value of a work of art is permanent, in the sense that it is unaffected by subsequent occurrences; secondly, that a work of art is unique in the sense that it cannot be compared quantitatively with other works; thirdly, that it derives these qualities from its partial embodiment of the real as opposed to the illusory appearances which the real presents to the senses; and fourthly, that for this reason the æsthetic appreciation of beauty possesses a quality of static tranquillity, and a capacity for lifting the individual out of the circle of selfish ideas and desires that

normally bound his horizon, into communion with—and in moments of ecstasy into participation in—the fundamental spirit that underlies reality.

These considerations seem to me obvious. They are as old as Plato, and as new as Schopenhauer: a circumstance which, to my mind, makes it the more surprising that a thinker, like yourself, whose general view bears so close an affinity to that of Schopenhauer, should so entirely have failed to provide for them.

ANTHONY. I am grateful to you, Professor Cameron, for your exposition. You have given what I consider to be a very adequate statement of the view of the academic mind. I believe this view to be in theory incorrect and in practice harmful; yet the expression you have given to it is both noble and elevated. And it is, I think, in the spiritual distinction of this view and in its ability to satisfy a lofty hope that there is to be found the main source of its appeal. It satisfies the desire for unity, and the desire for permanence; it points forward to a changeless world of reality, and it postulates of this reality that it shall be perfect. More important still it concentrates upon the fact of beauty, a fact which has always seemed of immense significance to the finest human minds, and accounts for that significance by the suggestion that in the contemplation of beauty we obtain a glimpse of reality itself: thus beauty is, as it were, the window through which we may look upon the perfection of the real. These considerations may serve to explain the hold which this theory has obtained upon the imaginations of men. As embraced by certain minds it has passed into mysticism, and men have sought to identify with spirit the changeless Forms which Plato held to underlie the world of seeming, or to merge their multiplicity into some unity yet more profound which they have dared to call God.

Yes, I grant you the nobility of your view; I fully recognise the importance of the considerations tending to make us hope that it is true. So important are they, that, for those who are disposed to mistake their hopes for judgments of probability, they are doubtless convincing. But for others the very attractiveness of the hypotheses is a warning: we are suspicious of a view to which our wishes

so strongly predispose us: we are anxious not to mistake the promptings of our heart for the compelling force of evidence.

And when we emancipate our minds from the distorting influence of our desires, we find that this hypothesis evinces a serious inability to square with the facts. We find, too, that in practice it is responsible for much that is bad in art, and affords a cover for that subordination of substance to form to which I have already referred in speaking of education.

How the Academic View is Antagonistic to Evolution.

If you will allow me, then, I propose in the first place to describe those manifestations of the academic mind theory which appear to me to be harmful, and, in the second place, to enlarge upon those aspects of my own conception which seem to me to demonstrate its capacity to explain the significance of what is greatest in art, while at the same time exhibiting its superior ability to square with the facts.

In the last resort, however, the comparative merits of the two views will, I think, be found to turn largely upon questions of a philosophical character, which will take us directly to our next and final discussion, when, I understand, my friend John will endeavour to deal with the more philosophical aspects of the difficulties you have raised. Do you approve of the plan I propose?

PROFESSOR CAMERON. Yes! But I am not clear that the view I have endeavoured to set forth lends itself to any special theory of art. I was attempting rather to assert the significance of beauty and its relation to reality, than to establish a criterion for the determination of what constitutes a good book or a good picture.

ANTHONY. I quite understand. But I think that philosophy has considerable influence on practice,—incidentally it is for this reason that I am trying to apply my friend's philosophy,—and I believe that the implications of your view underlie much that is second-rate in artistic production and wrong-headed in artistic criticism. I want, then, in the first place to describe those tendencies in art which appear to me to spring from a general theory of æsthetics not dissimilar from your own: the tendencies in question being to my

mind bad, bad, you understand, in the sense that they are obstructive to the purposes of the Life Force.

It will of course be obvious, that assuming my hypothesis with regard to the character of the Life Force to be correct, the attitude to works of art which you have adopted as your own must of necessity be harmful. When I stigmatised it just now as the attitude of the academic mind, you signified disagreement. But you must, I think, admit that it has many features in common with what I characterised as this attitude in its relation to education. In education the academic mind preserved the outworn dogmas and hypotheses of the past, and pressed them upon the young as the living truth of the present, on the assumption that thought once had value which must always retain that value. Your attitude to works of art is not dissimilar. Their value, you say, is permanent, their significance changeless, for the reason that the value and significance of works of art are not affected by what may succeed them. Very well then, it follows that they are as worthy of the attention and admiration of mankind to-day as they were on the day which gave them birth; and the academic world is right to go into ecstasies of admiration over Sophocles, to hold up his perfection of Form as a model to aspiring youth, and to measure the inferiority of Shaw by his failures to observe the standards of unity and good taste that Sophocles is supposed to have set.

Now if the value of Sophocles is really changeless, and is changeless because his work partakes of the nature of the real, all this is as it should be. But if Sophocles was a propagandist who wrote for the Athens of his day, and whose perfection of style and feeling for dramatic unity and effect were the gifts bestowed on him by the Life Force to enable him to obtain a hearing for its message, then, once that message has been delivered, the purpose of Sophocles is fulfilled. It follows that since the Athens of Sophocles is past, the modern world requires a new Sophocles to communicate to it a fresh instalment of the Life Force's message. But what if the new Sophocles finds that the old one has staked out a permanent claim on the public ear, as Samuel Butler has it, and that while he continues to squat there,

his own message must go unheard? Will not an attitude of mind which insists on retaining, in the position of eminence which he once so usefully occupied, an old Sophocles whose message is dead, whose thought is superseded, and whose vitality is extinct, will not such an attitude be obstructive to the purposes of the Force? Does it not compel the new men, whom the Force has thrown up to voice its promptings, to fight their way to an audience in the teeth of vested interests in the public ear, instead of finding a community receptive to that new message, for the purpose of delivering which they were created? If then we assume my hypothesis, and bear in mind the indictment of an analogous theory of education which follows from my hypothesis, the view of art which you have outlined will be clearly seen to be antagonistic to the progress of evolution. It will attribute permanent value to what is old and so distract men's attention from the emergence of what is new; it will use the lumber of the past to stifle and overlay the inspiration of the present. You will admit that this result follows if my hypothesis is correct?

PROFESSOR CAMERON. Certainly, if your hypothesis is correct, which I do not admit.

ANTHONY. I will ask you to waive that point for the moment, and to bear with me while I briefly run through certain tendencies in art and literature, which appear to me to spring from the view you have described. If I can show these tendencies to be harmful, the demonstration may perhaps not be without effect in weakening the authority of this view.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. Pray proceed.

Its Practical Manifestations: (1) The Demand for Unity.

ANTHONY. You say that it is the business of art to destroy the seeming reality of the world of appearances, and to recreate from it a world in which the nature of the real shall be more truly embodied. To do this it must in the first place strip away the irrelevances of actual life and present the play of motive and character, the influence upon character of heredity or of environment, the workings let

us say of overweening pride and of the nemesis that waits upon it, whatever in short it chooses as its subject-matter, in an artifical simplicity which will throw them into high relief. In life these elements can scarcely be disentangled from the complex skein of other phenomena with which they are interwoven : in art, which aims at unity, they must be presented as single threads that their ramifications may be discerned. In this way art will achieve a unity of presentment, and since it is, you say, the nature of the real to be a unity, the greater the unity the nearer to reality. This, then, is the first tendency I wish to consider ; the tendency to regard a great work of art as in some very important sense a unity.

Now life, of course, is not a unity. It is a bundle of incoherent motives and desires : it contains no pure thoughts, no pure instincts and no pure actions. Everything we think is shot through with half-apprehended thoughts of something else, everything we do is achieved by the suppression of something that fights against our doing it. There are, for instance, no truly brave men : some men are more afraid of some things than of others, that is all. Thus if I am more afraid of the stings of my conscience, the reputation of cowardice and the contempt of my fellow men than of the bullets of the enemy, I go over the top and am called brave : if, on the other hand, the bullets of the enemy inspire the greater fear, I skulk in the trench and am called a coward. Men combine to encourage the former type of cowardice and applaud it by calling it bravery, because its habitual practice is of advantage to them : essentially it is no braver than its contrary.

Similarly there are no truly virtuous men. It is our nature to obey our own instincts and impulses : some of us possess impulses whose expression is of benefit to society ; others possess, on the whole, the contrary impulses. The habit of acting in accordance with the first class of impulses is naturally approved by society and is called virtue. Vice, on the other hand, is the name given to the habit of acting in accordance with impulses whose expression is not approved. All men possess both kinds of impulses and are thus virtuous and vicious in turn.

I need not multiply instances. All human qualities are susceptible of similar analysis: in life all men are all things.

Now if art is to achieve the ideal of unity at which you aim, it must to a large extent turn its back upon this delightful and variegated hotch-potch of impulses and contradictions which is life. It must present men as wholly virtuous or wholly vicious, wholly brave or wholly base. Most early art follows this tendency. Thersites in Homer is wholly a knave, Achilles is wholly a hero. The characters in Greek plays, and indeed in all great tragedies, are painted solely in blacks or whites, and for this reason are wholly unlike life. The first method, then, of achieving unity is that of distorting life by undue simplification.

But it is not always necessary to distort. We may achieve the same result by selection. Select from the confusing welter of human passion and motive only those traits which are harmonious, which are, as we say, in character, and you still get your unity. You have destroyed your individual in the process, but that of course is unimportant. Hence arises the art which aims at bowdlerising its characters of all that makes them inconsistent, and we have the novels of Mr. Henry James. The characters of Henry James are animated by none of the grosser, or, shall I say, the more ordinary passions: these have all been selected away. Avarice, love of scandal, snobbishness, curiosity and esoteric chastities are the motives by which they are moved: lust and hate, jealousy and cruelty are unknown. We are presented with a distant stage set with ghost-like characters, who discourse in etiolated voices on bloodless themes. I think it is Chesterton who said that they have no faces.

To arrive at unity, then, you must indulge in rigorous simplification or rigorous selection. In so doing you will move right away from life: a result which will necessarily follow from the mere fact that life is not a unity. Life is composed of individuals none of whom are types: unity is composed of types who are individuals eviscerated of all that obscures the type.

Desiring unity, then, we shall set our faces against Realism at the outset. We shall be romantics. We shall look upon literature as a refuge from life, and we shall demand of it

that it shall pay us in beauty for what we have lost in reality.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. You mean in appearance: life is not the reality.

ANTHONY. I am sorry, Professor. I should have said in appearance, which is what, on your view, the world of common-sense mistakes for reality: but I am talking in my terms now, so, when I use the word reality, please understand me to speak in the language of the plain man. Once accept the divorce from life in the interests of unity, and your writer may concentrate on the creation of beauty with a good conscience. The world is rightly left behind, for is it not sordid and ugly? And with the world well left, the artist may henceforth spin from his imagination fantasies and romances riotous in beauty and perfect in form, provided only that they are unities.

The academic mind then will suspect the Realist and love the Romantic. The academic critic puts his women upon a pedestal and wraps his artist in cotton wool. A dreamer of dreams, a singer of songs, a spinner of fantasies, this artist who must not soil himself with the problems of the world; who must not dull his vision by contact with the real; who must not pollute the pure streams of his inspiration by a douche from Aldgate Pump! The artist may imagine, but he must not observe; he may dream his life, but he may not live his dreams.

Hence any attempt on the part of the artist to bring himself into touch with actual problems is regarded as a derogation from his high vocation. He must not intrude upon the preserves of politics and the practical man. The academic mind hates the artist who turns reformer. Let him create things of beauty, let his vision remain remote, let him sketch Utopias for the future, let him in fact do anything but busy himself with the present, and the academic mind will give him his due as the embellisher and decorator of life. But preach he must not. Thus Ruskin was chidden for his incursion into political theory; he should have gone on describing pretty pictures and fine scenery and remained an artist. Tolstoy was told that he would have done well to leave religion alone and continue to write fiction. In

our own day, Max Beerbohm the cartoonist, the spoilt darling of the critics, when he caricatured the features of artists and poets, is seriously admonished by the daily press when he produces caricatures of modern politicians, which teach the same lesson and point the same moral as the fourth satire in *Gulliver's Travels*. What business has an artist to see Yahoos in figures of modern eminence, and in so doing to pass an implied criticism on the society which has raised them to that eminence and consents to keep them there ?

Even Shaw has never been rated at his true worth, or if he has, his reputation has been extorted from the critics almost against their will. Why ? Because he is not content with constructing plots and drawing characters ; he insists on writing plays on modern problems and prefacing them with strictures upon the age. It is only to-day, when he has grown mellow with years and his problems are in process of solution or of being superseded by others, that his greatness is generally conceded.

I ask you to observe the fact of this hostility to the artist who meddles, and to note two things in relation to it. In the first place, it disguises its real character by invoking in its support that theory of the function of the artist as the creator of beauty, which you so eloquently expressed. In order that beauty may be achieved the work of art must be a unity. In order that it may be a unity it must turn its back on the irrelevances of life, and by selection and simplification produce what is called art. Realism, then, must fall short of what is greatest in literature, and propaganda and pamphleteering are outside the proper sphere of the artist. Thus it is your theory of art that the tendency I have described can, and does, adduce in its support.

In the second place this hostility, in its real character, can be shown on my view to be but another phase of the implacable opposition of the academic mind to the realisation of the purposes of the Life Force, which we have already had occasion to consider. Beauty is not new, it is as old as the hills, and the production of beauty in itself embodies, therefore, no fresh thrust forward on the part of the Force. But the artist who is himself the instrument of such a thrust will have something new to say, which is bound to possess the

two characteristics of direct application to society as he finds it, and of disagreeableness to the conservative elements in that society. If, therefore, great art is, as I would have you believe, an intimation of the direction in which the Life Force is moving, it is only natural that it should disturb the existing order of thought and society, and provoke the opposition of those who uphold it.

(2) The Emphasis on Form.

I now propose to turn to the second of the tendencies in art, or rather in artistic criticism, which may, I think, be traced directly to your view. I have spoken generally of the academic mind as that attitude of the intellect which subordinates substance to form. I now want to draw your attention to a somewhat specialised expression of this attitude as a canon of artistic and literary criticism. What I have in mind is the insistence on the importance of form in works of art.

Now it is clear that if we accept your view that the value of a work of genius remains constant, that value must be located very largely in the form which the work assumes. You must, I think, admit that the matter of many even of the greatest works loses something of its significance by the passage of centuries. Those old comedies of Aristophanes, in which every gibe told and every shaft had its target, are now more remarkable for the fertility and exuberance of the writer's wit than for its appropriateness: wit loses its edge when it has ceased to be topical. We may admire Pope in the abstract, but the full enjoyment of his malice died with his contemporaries. If value then is to be permanent, it must be largely bound up with excellence of form.

I do not want in this discussion to enter into the old controversy as to the relation between form and matter in literature and art. We shall doubtless agree that it is impossible in theory to draw any clear line between form and matter, such that we could say, " Here matter ends and form begins." We should, I imagine, also agree that in practice it is possible to speak of them as though they were distinct, and that excellence of both is essential in works of the highest kind, although any particular work may be pre-eminent in

the one rather than in the other. Personally I should weight the scales every time in favour of matter, you probably in favour of form. But would you agree with my view that after the lapse of centuries the value of a work of art must be sought almost entirely in its form?

PROFESSOR CAMERON. Very largely, I should say. I agree with you that after a time the matter loses significance; though not, of course, in philosophy.

ANTHONY. Precisely! Your attitude to form bears out what I am saying of the academic view. In order, however, that we may see exactly what it is that this view may involve, let us consider its *reductio ad absurdum*, which is admirably presented to us in its attitude to the Classics.

Form in the Classics.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. Surely you are not going to drag us through the classical education controversy! All the arguments for and against the Classics have been repeated *ad nauseam*. Let us then agree upon three things and be done with it: first, the Classics are distinctly useful from the educational point of view, and a thorough knowledge of them confers good taste; second, they are not so useful as their supporters pretend; third, the tendency to overrate the value of the Classics is largely economic. Teaching the Classics directly fits a man for nothing except to go on teaching the Classics; the livelihood of the University staffs depends, therefore, upon the continued acceptance of the belief that the Classics are all-important: while the Universities demand Classics, the public schools must supply the demand, and the preparatory schools must prepare for the public schools.

I think I have summed up everything that need be said by intelligent men about the Classics in these days. I cannot see that any of it is relevant to our present discussion.

ANTHONY. Your conciseness is admirable; there is indeed nothing left to say about the Classics, except one thing. You have overlooked one factor in their popularity, and it is this: while the form of the Classics remains intact their matter has lost most, if not all of its significance The Classics are not about anything which could conceivably be

of importance to anyone to-day. Who cares for the rights and wrongs of the quarrel between Cicero and Catiline, or for the political significance of Demosthenes' speeches against Philip ? As to Virgil, it is doubtful whether he ever embodied the promptings of the Life Force, he never foreshadowed the future, he merely reflected the more snobbish present ; but what is there in Homer that could by the wildest stretch of imagination contain a message for us to-day ? The thought of all these men is out of date ; it is barren and lifeless ; all that remains is the form, a mere husk.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. Surely you are rather letting your arguments run away with you, sir. This is wild talk ; it is the veriest commonplace that the Classics are full of lessons for to-day. Analogies with modern life crop up on almost every page.

ANTHONY. I know it is a commonplace, and, like most commonplaces, it is quite untrue.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. Oh, fiddlesticks ! Take any great classical writer, take Thucydides for instance. He is full of sage reflections on the politicians and parties of his age, that apply to the politicians and parties of all ages. He is a store-house of political wisdom, which our present rulers ignore with lamentable results.

ANTHONY. But is he ? I know that that is the kind of thing that persons, who have a sufficient knowledge of Greek to give them a vested interest in Thucydides, have formed the habit of saying. They bleat about his unapproachable sagacity, his remarkable detachment : he seems to provoke that sort of thing. But personally I have never been able to find in his vaunted reflections anything but a string of platitudes, which are the stock-in-trade of every political rhetorician. He tells you, for instance, that selfish aggrandisement always meets with its own Nemesis—a rather pompous way of saying that pride goes before a fall. He remarks that when Athens was struck by the plague, the restraints imposed by society upon individual behaviour gave way, and what are commonly called morals went by the board. Naturally ! We all of us know that ; Defoe said the same, but nobody thought him particularly wise for saying it.

And does it after all seem to you so extraordinarily

penetrating to have noticed that "fear when attended by strength causes greater alarm to one's enemies"? Yet that is a pretty fair specimen of the remarks in the celebrated speeches.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. The wisdom is there and the detachment: you can make any writer ridiculous by arbitrarily choosing your extracts. But leaving Thucydides out of the question, you must admit that a knowledge of Greek history is of inestimable value for the potential modern statesman. The Peloponnesian war, for example, had many features in common with the recent, great war. Ancient Athens presents a parallel with modern England: study her history and you see working clearly, simply and on a small stage, the motives and forces which the greater complexity of modern society makes it so much harder to disentangle. Reading Greek history is like looking at the world through a pair of inverted opera glasses; the world is seen small but very clear.

ANTHONY. That, too, is commonly said, and I think it is for the most part terribly misleading. It has led people to endeavour to analyse the forces at work in modern society into the same elements as those, with which their study of Greek history has made them familiar.

I have already spoken at some length on the subjective character of our interpretation of history: what you look for in history you will find, whether it is there or not; and the result is that modern phenomena, seen in relation to a false analogy with ancient Greece which is taken for granted, are seen in wrong perspective.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. The elements of a political situation are ever the same: they derive their roots from human nature.

ANTHONY. They are not. There are many important and fundamental aspects in which the world of ancient Greece was radically different from the world of to-day, and the differences are of such a kind as to render any interpretation of modern phenomena based on knowledge of Greek history fundamentally misleading.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. Mention them.

ANTHONY. Surely that would take us even further afield than we are straying at the moment. I cannot embark on

such a discussion if I am ever to resume the application of the Life Force to literature.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. I am interested largely because I disagree. Can you not briefly adumbrate?

ANTHONY. I will mention just two differences of the kind in question. In the first place Greek history is susceptible not at all, or susceptible very little, to economic interpretation. Where ways of life and habits of thought and action are largely customary, they are in themselves sufficient to explain the activities of states on ordinary, political lines. They were so customary in Greece, despite all the *flair* of the Athenian intellectuals, to a much greater extent than is the case to-day. Hence the student, steeped in the history and literature of Greece, will be apt to overlook the economic motive in modern society almost as much as Marx over-emphasised it.

In the second place, the size of the modern state renders it unamenable to the influence of individuals or even of groups of individuals to a hitherto unprecedented extent. The Greek city state could be swayed by a few men: the ambitions, the eloquence, the love affairs even, of one public man could determine its destinies: human will and effort counted. Even the democracies, when such existed, could be really representative. In a modern state this is not the case. So complex are the strands that condition events, so vast the machinery of government, that what actually happens is the result not of human will or effort but of the fortuitous interaction of a number of hidden forces, whose outcome none may foresee and whose genesis none may detect. The result is that the thinker or statesman who knows his Greek or Roman history, will be misled into thinking that the wishes of the people count to-day, that a definite line of policy can still be put into effect, or that the will of an outstanding personality can be made to matter. He will, in fact, under-estimate the deterministic factor in modern politics. For this reason the record of Greek and Roman history is practically useless as a guide to current events. But let us return to classical literature. Do you still contend that its matter retains life?

PROFESSOR CAMERON. I still think your thesis outrageously untrue. Take Satire, Juvenal, for instance,——

ANTHONY. Used society as a mere peg to hang his rhetorical hat on. Not an ounce of sincere feeling behind it: Pope was better, Swift a giant beside him!

PROFESSOR CAMERON. You talk of new and subversive thought: what about Lucretius?

ANTHONY. He may have been original in his day, but is now hopelessly out of date! He is only useful as a stick for the Rationalists to beat their drum with, and pretty hollow it sounds.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. Tacitus?

ANTHONY. A retailer of court scandal; an indigent snob growling at efficiency because it was maintained by the wrong men. No, I think I have said enough to show how futile and irrelevant for modern purposes is the matter of these Classics! Their form remains, I grant you, and that is why they are cherished and boosted by the academic mind. They are all form and no matter; how very convenient! Concentrate upon them, steep the young mind in them, and you will render it alike impervious to the promptings of the Life Force in itself, and deaf to the message it is delivering through others. It is recounted that in the Middle Ages the monks insisted upon the composition of Latin Verses, because it provided adequate occupation for the minds of intelligent young men, and prevented them from undertaking inconvenient, scientific enquiry. The invention of Latin Verses exemplifies the objects which the teaching of the Classics has been designed to serve ever since.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. But the endeavour to master these languages with their complexity and logical structure is itself a challenge to thought.

ANTHONY. No! I agree that they make you think; but do they ever let you stop to think? If you did you would see the futility and aimlessness of the whole process. The common presumption that, to enjoy classical literature, it is necessary to learn the original tongue in which the thought is conveyed, is in itself an admission that it is not the thought which is required. For the thought can be conveyed adequately in translation: in translation only the form is lost. The cry of horror which the suggestion that the Classics

may be read in translations provokes in your average don, is thus evidence enough that the form of the original alone is what has value. Pressed to admit this, he will, it is true, concoct a theory to the effect that in translation even the thought is lost, some subtle shades of meaning and expression being detected only in the original, and evaporating in the process of translation like the bouquet of an old wine. But this theory deceives nobody who has taken the pains to do any translation work himself, in the course of which he discovers that it is only his own incompetence, and not any inherent unwillingness in his material, that prevents him from conveying every *naunce* of classical thought, however clumsily, into his own tongue.

If you read the Classics for their substance, translations will serve the purpose of the original; if you read them for the form, the original alone will serve. The fact that, with a few exceptions in favour of Plato and Aristotle, nobody does voluntarily read the Classics in translations, which are chiefly used as cribs by schoolboys who are supposed to be reading them in the original, is evidence first, that the literary form is the sole excuse for their cultivation, and second, that nobody cares twopence one way or the other about their substance. The academic mind does right to subordinate matter to form in the Classics, for the matter is now practically non-existent; but it is wrong to invest the form with a false value in the interests of which the minds of men are turned away from matter which is living. Form which enshrines matter that is dead is like the stick of a spent rocket.

Thus the Classics hang like an incubus round the neck of literature, and the Life Force, thrusting new inspirations through the unconscious minds of men, finds itself choked with the litter of its past achievements.

(3) The Insistence on Style.

I turn now to the third of those tendencies in art and literature which, on my view, derive directly from your theory of the function of art and literature. And here I should perhaps apologise for the unnecessary heat which

manifested itself in some of my remarks on the Classics. It is, you understand, my intention at the moment simply to depict these tendencies without comment of any kind: it will, I am afraid, be sufficiently evident that I regret them, but equally do I regret that I should, at any rate at this stage, have conveyed such an impression. My reasons for regarding these tendencies as injurious will appear later. For the moment I ask you to forgive remarks which deplore this or that as obstructive to the purposes of the Life Force, and to dismiss them as incidental dogmatisms which I shall hope to support in due course.

It is sufficiently understood, then, that in describing this third tendency, my object is simply to throw into clear relief exactly what it is that your theory involves in practice.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. Very well! I quite understand your feelings about the Classics. Memories of syntax, irregular verbs, paradigms, and gender lines still rankle.

ANTHONY. They do. I have already noted two elements in literature which are particularly pleasing to the academic mind, namely, unity and form. I now propose to add a third, which is style. The academic mind places great value on style for the same reason as it values unity and form. Style, which is one of the elements which contribute to form, is permanent: it remains constant while matter fades; insistence on the value of style supports, therefore, the theory that literature possesses permanent value, and that it is its business to achieve beauty instead of to disseminate propaganda.

Now you can trace, running like a continuous thread throughout the whole history of literature, a succession of writers and schools of writers who believed in style. Pliny the Younger and Seneca, Villon and Verlaine, Walter Pater, and Oscar Wilde and Stevenson, these were all men who believed that it behoved them to take pains to acquire what they called style, as a sort of necessary preliminary measure before they could begin to write. Instead of regarding language as a vehicle for conveying thought and feeling, and style as merely that kind of language which conveys them in the most appropriate way, they have adopted an attitude to style which is like that of a conjuror who uses his apparatus

before an audience which does not know the trick. Style, to put it at its highest, is like beauty, a mere device to sugar the pill of thought; but by writers of the school I am describing, the function of style has been so exaggerated, that the way in which they said things came to seem more important to them than the things they said.

Now, personally I am doubtful whether good style can ever be consciously achieved. It is like pleasure in that, if directly pursued, it eludes you: but, like pleasure and also like beauty, it comes incidentally and as it were by a fluke, to adorn and reward the efforts of those who are actively and strenuously engaged in something else. Now what is that something else? The striving to give expression to the light within you; the being entirely and wholly wrapped up in some message that you wish to deliver; the feeling that this message and the saying of it is of supreme importance, and the endeavouring to say it clearly and briefly and then have done with it. These things, which are the surrendering of oneself to the inspiration of the Life Force, must come first; and if the Life Force is really prompting your words, you may rest assured, that it will take good care that they are clothed in a style which will secure for them attention and respect. Thus Swift, who was perhaps the greatest prose writer in the English language, achieved his style by the simple process of being too wrapped up in what he had to say to have leisure to notice how he was saying it; too fiercely indignant with the abuses he satirised to have the patience to polish his shafts.

Provided, then, that the matter be living, the style will accommodate itself naturally to its requirements. Moreover, different matters require different styles: the Life Force must be suffered to experiment with the methods by which its message is to be presented. Style, therefore, should be free and various, not confined within a framework of copy-book rules evolved by pedants, not clipped and groomed like a box hedge. Should a living experiment be at the mercy of a pack of grammarians, to be stabbed with their commas and their colons? No! It should thrive and blossom freely according to its self-chosen laws; should change continually and develop, discarding outgrown members

with ease, and fulfilling the function of a midwife, not of an obstruction to the message of the Life Force.

Good style is, in short, a grace which adorns the writings of a powerful and original mind. It is only in an intellectual soil that is both deep and rich that style can blossom. It is in a real sense a luxury, and like any luxury it is dependent on a good income : it comes when a man has ceased to grapple with his subject for mastery, and has begun to be at play with it.

I am afraid I have been betrayed again into airing my own views by way of comment, instead of confining myself to a simple statement of the foibles of the academic mind. But my polemic on style will serve its purpose. It will throw into clearer relief the opposing view which is, I fear, the prevalent one in literature. I think I have already mentioned a maxim observed of good architects, to the effect that the architect should decorate a construction, but should not construct a decoration.

Mr. Banks. Have you ? I don't remember.

Anthony. Whether I have or not, you may take it that the undue importance attributed by the academic mind to style is one form of constructing a decoration.

Now this insistence on the style and form of presentation serves the important purpose of distracting attention from the matter presented. Just as there has always been a school of writers who cultivated style as an end in itself, so there has always been a school of critics whose criticism has been primarily directed to the manner instead of to the matter of literature. Henry James and George Moore will serve as examples of the type, a type who believe in the existence of a thing called good writing, that is to say good writing as such. These critics, if pressed, would have to admit, assuming them to be logical, that there exists no reason in theory why a novel about Willesden Junction, or a lyric on sardine tins, should not achieve a literary excellence as high as that of the works of Conrad or of Keats.

Professor Cameron. I admit that much literary criticism is devoted to style, to expression and to diction, to what, in short, you call the form of presentation. I think that it is rightly so devoted since, as you have remarked,

the value of these elements is constant and remains imperishable, even when the matter has lost its significance. I admit this because I am talking in your language, and assuming for the moment that it is possible, for the purposes of discussion, to effect the complete division between form and matter which, in spite of your opening disclaimer, you are seeking to make. My own view, though I insert it here in parenthesis, is that the two are inseparable ; and the fact that it is impossible to say where the one ends and the other begins seems to me to vitiate many of your arguments. Assuming, however, that the distinction can be made for the purposes of the discussion, what I do *not* admit is that the insistence on form in general, and on style in particular, is deliberately designed to distract men's attention from new and subversive thought in literature, or that in point of fact it has that effect.

The Case of Mr. Shaw.

ANTHONY. Very well : let us take a concrete instance. Take the case of Shaw. Now Shaw is undoubtedly a teacher, prophet and reformer, if ever such existed. His primary bias is Puritanical ; his primary object, to expose outworn conventions and to spring-clean institutions which are choked with the cobwebs of hypocrisy and pretence. Instances of such institutions are family life, the medical profession and the party system. It so happens that he has a sense of humour and can write good plays : the drama is, in fact, the vehicle by means of which he seeks to convey the doctrine with which he has been entrusted by the Life Force.

What is the result ? Critics have combined to seize upon the form of his presentation, the dramatic form, and to ignore, or at best to write off as a series of mental fads and caprices, the doctrines they enshrine.

There has been a consistent attempt to regard Shaw as a comedian, who either succeeds or fails in being funny, instead of as a prophet whose gospel is either true or false. His plays are criticised technically, and " Candida," where the element of propaganda is most in abeyance, is preferred on grounds of unity and economy in construction. It is with the greatest difficulty that Shaw has established himself as

a serious thinker, who passionately believes what he asserts, in face of the almost universal refusal to consider him in any other light than that of a popular buffoon, whose plays, being written for the sole purpose of entertaining the public, are accordingly to be judged solely by the criterion of whether they succeeded in doing so.

During the war Shaw succeeded in irritating the popular mind to a hitherto unprecedented extent, and this circumstance, combined with the fact that of late years he has written plays, which contain so much of philosophic dialogue and so little of popular entertainment, that no theatrical manager can, in the general way of business, afford to produce them, has to a slight extent succeeded in producing the conviction that Shaw does not care two straws for his power to amuse, in comparison with his capacity to expound the truth that is in him. This conviction is, of course, correct: no real artist cares about his art any more than the chemist cares about the sugar on his pills. What he does care about is the truth which his art seeks to convey, and Shaw being a great man, has at last managed to drive home this elementary maxim, in respect of himself at least, in the teeth of the united opposition of the critics, who insisted on prating only of his sense of the theatre and of the brilliance of his wit.

So much for the world's attitude to Shaw in general; now consider the attitude of one typical critic to his style in particular. Shaw, as is well known, possesses in a high degree the power of writing first-rate English prose. But the character of the prose shows that he sets very little store by it. It is chaste, austere and cold: it eschews epithets, it avoids hyperbole, it disdains all those adventitious trappings of ornament and artifice, of harmony and euphony, by which a writer like Pater strove to disguise the fundamental meagreness of his thought. It is evident at a glance that all Shaw cares about is expressing his ideas, and style is to him a mere device for enabling him to do this as forcibly as possible.

Now Dixon Scott was a critic typical of the academic mind in his attitude to art and literature. That is to say, he cared for fine writing, and he cared very little for anything

else. As it is natural for a human being to look for what he values, and under suitable circumstances to insist that he has found it whether it is there to find or not, Dixon Scott wrote an article on Shaw, in which he speedily comes to the conclusion that Shaw's style is nothing but an intricate and elaborate conspiracy to make us believe that he cares nothing about style, when in reality the style itself shows that he regards it as of supreme importance. Admitting the obvious fact that, on the face of it, the style is as straightforward, as little ornate as it is possible for a good style to be, this critic proceeds to construct an ingenious theory to show that deliberate austerity is the most potent, literary drug yet devised to bemuse the imaginations of readers. Every ancillary charm, it seems, is dourly and ruthlessly threshed out of Shaw's style ; all emotional adjuncts are eschewed ; there is an absence of metaphor ; exclamation marks are lacking ; apostrophes are barred. Why ? Simply and solely in order that the senses may be so intoxicated, the imagination so dizzied by the effect of sheer speed achieved by these economies, that the reason of the reader is willy-nilly seduced by the argument, and becomes, as it were, a mere plaything in the hands of the stylistic wizard. Ostensibly, Shaw's style is prose written to be uttered on the rapid levels of man to man speech ; in reality, it retains unsuspected all those qualities of balance, rhythm and picturesqueness which are unabashedly displayed in the orthodox periods of classical oratory, and which sail into the mind's citadel by the more important senses, while the colloquialisms keep the common one engaged. Shaw's style is further compared to a level-thrusting bar of steel and to a swift-driving mechanism, while Shaw himself is envisaged as the romantic artist, whose object is to please and debauch the senses of his audience, not by the beauty of line, the depth of colour, the harmony of chords, or the pomp of high sounding words, but by the beauty and sensual ecstasy of sheer speed. Here, then, you have a sample of the attitude of the academic mind to a propagandist like Shaw.

Shaw saw this precious article, and I seem to remember some remarks of his by way of commentary that appeared in a review, or preface, or perhaps in a special article written

in reply. Shaw bemoans the fact that people never will take him seriously : he comes to us, he tells us, with a gospel to preach, and people regard him as a licensed jester because he makes jokes : he comes with a political theory to demonstrate, and this fellow, Dixon Scott, hails him as a mere literary stylist, a weaver of word tapestries because he writes good English.

When, for instance, Shaw points out that the infant mortality rate in a Bradford slum is just about double that of a fashionable London suburb, or that the only way man can recover from the effects of a civilisation, whose main achievement consists in the command it has won over nature, is by retiring for long periods into the country where nature is still in undisputed command over men, the response of the academic mind, as typified by Mr. Dixon Scott, is to ejaculate, ' What lucid presentation of fact,' ' What crushing and mordant wit,' ' What unexpected irony,' ' What masterly economy of material.' It is as if, says Shaw, a man on hearing a cry of " Fire " were to call attention to the distinct enunciation, the remarkable resonance, and the vibrant, bell-like tones which characterised the voice, but beyond this announcement of the æsthetic gratification imparted to his sense of hearing, were to take no action in the matter.

' You young whelp,' says Shaw in effect to Mr. Dixon Scott, ' here am I telling you of scandals and infamies enough to make any decent man's blood boil, and all the effect I have is to draw your elegant attention to the excellent, literary balance of my sentences. In God's name drop these æsthetic fiddlesticks and tell me what you are going to do about it.' Shaw's outburst was typical not of himself alone. The indignation aroused in all great artists by those who insist on regarding them as the mere creators of beautiful or wonderful things, finds perhaps its chief expression in the contempt of one of the greatest of them all, for those who begged him to work miracles. Knowing that men's minds are as sleepy as their inquisitiveness is wide awake, he foresaw that they would be only too ready to snatch at the slightest excuse for forgetting the difficult message in the wonder of the miracles that accompanied its delivery, just as in our day Dixon Scott was ready enough to use his admiration for the

style as an excuse for shutting his intelligence to the lesson the style conveyed.

It is this question of style which constitutes, I think, the clearest instance of that sacrifice of matter to form which I have spoken of as characteristic of the academic mind. And this sacrifice, as I have tried to show, derives both its support and its sanction from that theory which regards a work of art as possessing permanent and changeless value.

Summary of Preceding Argument.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. A very interesting diatribe on style! But really it is highly questionable whether any body of writers or critics holds the exaggerated views which the necessity of strengthening your argument induces you to attribute to them. Let us assume, however, that they do; you have still to establish the fact that the stylistic tendency is harmful. And even if we assume this further proposition to be established, does it follow that it is harmful in the special sense that is relevant for your purpose?

ANTHONY. In what sense do you mean?

PROFESSOR CAMERON. You hold, I believe, that the Life Force in its conflict with matter and circumstance proceeds by the method of trial and error. Any experiment, the result of which retards its purpose instead of furthering it, will, I take it, be harmful, and may in due course expect to be scrapped. Now it seems that you regard insistence on literary style as harmful in this way, at any rate in so far as it obscures the significance of the matter the form conveys: but you have not up to the present produced any evidence in favour of this contention.

ANTHONY. One moment, please! The occurrence of what is harmful does not necessarily and always arise from mistakes on the part of the Force; from experiments that have gone wrong. You see, my friend John is compelled to admit the existence of free will in human beings. Not only does the Life Force create instruments imperfectly adapted to its purpose, but those instruments possess the capacity for furthering purposes of their own which may well be inconsistent with it. This circumstance arises from the intrusion of matter, which the power behind the Universe has to use

as the medium in which to create its instruments. The harmful and obstructive may therefore arise through human free will. However, we are retracing ground which John has already covered, and incidentally wandering from our immediate subject.

I must now try to show, then, in what respects the theory of art which you have propounded, and the literary tendencies which it is used to sanction, are harmful. Let us consider separately the effects of the type of art and literature in question upon the writer and upon the reader or critic, bearing in mind that what we have to say will apply in an equal degree, *mutatis mutandis*, to the artist and to his public.

I. The Effects of Art that Aims at Pleasing.

What, then, in the first place, is the effect of the academic artist upon the public? We agree that it is his function to please them. Very well then, he must invent romances!

PROFESSOR CAMERON. Why must he necessarily invent romances?

ANTHONY. Because most men's lives being drab and grey—lives whose tragedy is that nothing ever happens—the artist who seeks only to please must portray lives that are vivid and striking, in which the tragedy is that things will not stop happening. When he is a good artist he writes *Treasure Island*: when he is a bad one, detective stories in the *Boy's Own Paper*.

By the same token he must give us stories of hectic and passionate love, in which persons with impossible emotions make sacrifices upon the altars of ridiculous affections. Why again? Because, you say, it is the business of the artist to please. Most people's lives are loveless, or if they love, people love like grocers and love for a few months; yet most of us are in love with love, and if we cannot get it in our lives, we must get the next best thing to it in our books and pictures. So the good writer pleases us with *Sappho* and *Lorna Doone*, the bad one with *The Way of an Eagle* and *The Rosary*. Our lives, again, are lives of prose: they consist of a buying of things, a making of the money wherewith to buy them, and a perpetual travelling to and from the places in which we

make it, to the places in which we consume what it buys, the former being called cities and the latter suburbs. As we spend about four-fifths of our time in obtaining the means to make life possible and about one-fifth in living, in which our lack of practice produces the inevitable result that we bungle the business of life altogether, and as we all insist on leaving our offices to travel to our dormitories and our dormitories to travel to our offices at the same time, with the inevitable consequences of bustle and overcrowding, I leave it to you to estimate how much of beauty and how much of poetry clothe our everyday experience.

Men whose waking vision is bounded by bricks and mortar, and whose lives are lives of hurry and prose, demand for their pleasure and relaxation pictures of nature which are called landscapes, and poems of elegance and grace which are called sonnets and lyrics. Hence the artist whose business it is, on your theory, to cater for the public taste by producing beauty, must keep up a perpetual output of pretty pictures and pretty poems.

Now, having reduced the artist to the rôle of an entertainer only, what is the most that we can ask of him? That he should so refine our senses with beautiful pictures and beautiful music, that seeing and hearing, instead of remaining a mere passive receptivity on the part of the senses, should become consciously critical acts vigorously demanding fine buildings, good furniture, suitable household utensils, and pleasant sounds for their daily use and enjoyment, and protesting equally vigorously against over-furnishing, over-clothing, foul air, ugly sights, and inharmonious sounds. At his best then, on your view, it is the function of the artist by cultivating our senses, to help us to see more beauty in the world, and so to put more beauty there for ourselves to see. At his worst he becomes the mere satisfaction of an appetite. He supplies the craving for romance and sentimentality engendered by the unnatural conditions of modern civilisation, much as the pastrycook supplies the appetite for cakes, the products of the two being not dissimilar, except that it is only fair to the pastrycook to admit that, while his confections are compounded of good cream, butter, sugar and eggs, the second-rate artist uses as his subject-matter

nothing but an unwholesome hash of cheap emotions. Where the real artist is like a chemist who produces to purge, the second-rate artist is like a confectioner who produces to please.

Now you will not, I imagine, be disposed to deny the deleterious effect of this kind of art, the art of confectionery. It can debauch a man's mind, enthral his senses and enfeeble his imagination, until he comes to regard the world of romance as a sort of glorified pleasure-garden set with amorous intrigues. What is more, this kind of art and this view of the function of art are deliberately encouraged by the academic mind in general, and by our rulers in particular, because the art of the confectioner acts as a narcotic, turning a man's thoughts from effort to pleasure, and concentrating all his energies upon the endeavour to obtain for himself the life of amusement, which the heroes of his romantic novels have led him to regard as an ideal. Just as the classics are used to sate the appetite for thought and to divert curiosity for the new into admiration of the old, so are poets and singers, painters and pretty women, and all the appanages of the romantic life employed to dope and drug the natural aspirations of the young to realise the better world that might be, and to charm them into a sensuous acquiescence in the world that is.

What you will be less disposed to admit is that even good art, when it makes the production of beauty its *raison d'être*, produces an effect which is not only not dissimilar, but is even more harmful, in the sense that the best minds and the most ardent spirits, which are soon cloyed to surfeit by the sickly sweet confections of the romantic poet and novelist, are often permanently led astray, and withdrawn from the service of the Life Force, by the nobler productions of the purely decorative artist.

The Worship of Women.

This subversion of purpose is achieved in a number of ways. Not the least important results from the fact that the continual enjoyment of decorative art leads to the worship of women. As a broad generalisation I would be prepared to assert that all serious art which is not the vehicle of some

evolutionary thrust of the Life Force, which is not, that is to say, illustrative of a religion, or a spiritual representation of a new conception of politics or morals, is concerned with the idealisation of women ; with the result that a man who is led to believe the beautiful myths that music and painting and poetry have told him of woman, is tempted to devote his life to her pursuit and cultivation, believing that in her alone is to be found joy incarnate, when he should be going about the business of the Life Force. And the woman, having the function to fulfil for which the Force created *her*, is only too ready to acquiesce in this state of affairs, and to utilise the ingenious device of silence with which she has been purposely endowed by the Force, to allow the man to mistake the ideal visions of her beauty, purity and kindness, which he has culled from his reading of romances, for reality, and his own dreams of ambition and achievement for her's. But, once the bait of beauty has been swallowed and the woman's purpose fulfilled, she shows no compunction in disillusioning the unfortunate idolater and is quite prepared to make his life into a little hell of scolding and reproach, unless he is willing to turn himself into a mere breadwinner for her children, by consenting to do the work for which the world is prepared to pay him, instead of insisting on following the light which is in him. Now a man's inner light is simply his awareness of the urge of the Life Force, prompting and directing him to certain kinds of activity, and as the world is not only not ready for such activity, but is determined on grounds of conservatism to resist it as strenuously as it can, it follows nine times out of ten that the world is much more likely to put the pioneer of the Life Force into prison for following his subversive impulses, than to repay him with the livelihood which is necessary for the upkeep of his wife and children.

Of course when the man happens to be an artist, that is to say a person whose inheritance from the Force is as direct and powerful as that of the average woman, he will swallow the bait and refuse to take the hook, enjoying love and beauty as a recreation, yet refusing to allow them and the responsibilities which their enjoyment brings in its train, to turn him from his purpose. But for most the blandishments of love and of romance prove too strong, and the would-be

artist subsides into the breadwinner. And each time this process occurs, each time a man falls a victim to poetry and art, and by consequence to women whom poetry and art have idealised for him, the academic mind may congratulate itself on withdrawing yet one more recruit from the band of those whom the Life Force has generated to break through the bonds of the past and to pave the way for the development of the future.

It happens sometimes that the shock of disillusionment, which follows the substitution of the world of reality for that of romance, is sufficiently violent to disgust even those who are not first-rate artists in their own right with the life of breadwinning. Such cases are normally those in which the woman proves on close acquaintance to be devoid of all natural attractions, except those with which the Life Force has adventitiously endowed her. The emancipation of the first-rate artist joined to such a spouse is a comparatively easy process. Even the second-rater sometimes achieves it. Thus it will be found that an abnormal proportion of the men who have left their mark upon the world, the Socrates, the Beethovens, the Newtons, the Merediths, were married to scolds or drunkards, who, after first making the life of domestic acquiescence intolerable, roundly abused their husbands for their selfishness and unpractical idealism when they incontinently left them, or insisted that their wives should share the pittance which was all their refusal to do any work except their own work could win for them.

In order that I may exonerate this excursion upon women from the charge of a digression, let me just briefly run over the steps which have led to it from our main theme.

The academic mind and the theory of art which it countenances, encourage the production of decorative art, insisting that it is the business of the artist to entertain and not to teach.

One of the objects which this attitude is designed to serve is the lulling of the discontents of the young, and the diverting of their creative activities to the pursuit of ideals of beauty, of love and of so-called art, by which is meant art which glorifies beauty and love.

By this means inconvenient activities calculated to disturb

the academic mind and to modify the structure of society are banked down, much as if you were to stay a healthy appetite for roast beef with a spoonful of treacle.

The methods by which decorative art achieves this result are various. In general they consist in diverting a man's attention to the life of the senses, thereby producing the dilettante, who unfits himself for the serious purposes of life by his pursuit of the will-o'-the-wisp of beauty whether in pictures, in music, in sculpture, in poetry, or in nature. More particularly it is the effect of decorative art so to inflame the imagination with the beauty which it attributes to woman, that under its influence a man either ignores in her pursuit the impulses which the Life Force has implanted in him, or is deluded into the belief that woman will give strength to his aim and inspiration to his teaching, whereby his effectiveness in life will be increased. The belief that with a woman at his side a man may do great things in the world, is a common form of this delusion, which is, of course, seduously supported by the woman. Sooner or later, of course, the man is disillusioned; but by the time he realises that he is for the woman merely an instrument for winning bread for her children, his ambition has departed and his revolutionary ardour has cooled. Now I assert that this chain of occurrences, which I cannot but regard as harmful from the Life Force point of view, is strengthened and welded together by that peculiar view of the function of the artist which you hold, and which is exploited by the academic mind with the objects I have described.

MR. BANKS. But if the artist may not please us under pain of debauching our imagination and enfeebling our will in the terrifying way you describe, what is the poor fellow to do? Would you confine art to the writing of tracts, and the portrayal of pictorial hells? And how are we to tell in any one case whether the work of the artist is a true embodiment of the purposes of the Life Force, or merely one of those pleasant confections of emotion to which you have referred so slightingly? And why should we not enjoy those confections anyway?

ANTHONY. You ask a number of different questions, Mr. Banks, most of which I have already answered implicitly.

As to why we should not enjoy the confections and be content, my answer is that a permanent diet of méringues turns a man into a stick of sugar-candy, when it does not make him sick. The life that consists of the pursuit of pleasure is a tiring life : and the art that aims solely at pleasing by the representation of beauty is in the end a tiring art. Slavery to beauty, like slavery to pleasure, is intolerable servitude, the only kind of slavery that is at all bearable being slavery to the purposes of the Life Force. Literature that disturbs and deranges our ideas, that hints a new morality, aspires to a new deity, or suggests a new conception of personal relations, may not be pleasing in the strict sense of the word, but it is never tiring : the proof of which is that Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, an austere work, difficult to follow and demanding concentration, survives as a second bible, whereas the plays of Etheredge and Wycherley, whose sole aim is to please by variations upon the themes of sensual intrigue, are unknown outside the libraries of connoisseurs in pornographic literature.

The Marks of Great Art.

As to how the art which expresses the purpose of the Life Force is to be distinguished from imitative art which seeks only to please by reflecting the present, there is no certain mark of differentiation. In general it is left to time to demonstrate the difference between the propaganda of the day which survives as many ages as it takes mankind to learn its lesson, and the work of beauty produced as a joy for all time which does not survive the season that gave it birth. A fair index to the quality of any work of art may, however, be sought in the attitude of the academic mind. I have already noted that the academic mind regards the artist as a sort of refined entertainer, whose function it is to please and to divert. But once the power to please, which all artists possess, is transformed into the power to annoy, the academic mind becomes hostile. For where the artist exercises the power to annoy, he does so in virtue of the fact that his art is the vehicle of new thought. Compare the panegyrics lavished upon the first two sonatas and the first symphony of Beethoven, in which he gloriously imitated

Haydn, with the uniformly hostile reception of the Eroica which broke new ground.

I have had occasion at several stages in to-day's discussion and in that of yesterday to draw attention to this antagonism of the academic mind to fresh developments of the Life Force, the reasons for it, and the numerous devices in education and in literary and artistic criticism in which it expresses itself. The academic mind is the mind of old men: its stock of imagination and impulse being exhausted, it is impervious to their manifestations in others. Thus in the emergence of new ideas it can see only a development which threatens its own position. Being too inelastic to assimilate them, its only course is to stigmatise them as erroneous in the world of thought, just as in the sphere of music and pictorial art it denounces as bad taste such modern developments as are expressed in the Cubist movement or the music of Stravinsky.

But just as the hostility of the academic mind is the surest guarantee of vitality in the movement it dislikes, so is the process by which that hostility fades into acquiescence a sign that the movement in question has fulfilled its purpose. Such a development signifies that current thought has absorbed the new set of ideas and readjusted itself in consequence. The earlier representatives of the academic mind, overborne, as they usually if not invariably are, by an authentic evolutionary push, are succeeded by those who are only too glad to give their benediction to the artistic development which their predecessors ruthlessly persecuted. Why? Because the necessary readjustment of the community's stock of ideas having taken place, the vitality of the art which effects the readjustment is spent. Thought signs its own death warrant when it succeeds in imposing itself upon society, and the paradoxes of yesterday become the commonplaces of to-day. Thus it is the Nemesis of those who first tell the truth, that we think after a few years that we have always known what they have told us.

And when the new truth has found its place among the common stock of ideas, when its message has ceased to be a message, there is left only the form in which that message was delivered. The form is usually attractive, it must needs have been to have acted as a suitable vehicle for the message;

but that does not mean that in the beauty of the form lay the value of the art. It does, however, enable us to understand why at this stage the academic mind can afford to abandon its hostility, and, since the teeth of the new development have been drawn by the acceptance of its matter, to bestow a benediction upon its form. The form will now be useful to strengthen the barricade which is perpetually being erected against the intrusion of the new, a barricade of which, as we have seen, the classics is the foundation.

An amusing instance of this process has recently occurred in connection with the plays of Mr. George Bernard Shaw. I am sorry to be compelled so frequently to refer to him, but as he is one of the very few artists of our time, he must needs be perpetually in request as an example.

I need not recount in detail the antagonism which Shaw's Plays and Prefaces provoked in the early days. He was so generally abused as an anarchist in politics, a free lover in morals and an atheist in religion, that to the middle classes he came to seem a kind of bogey, a living embodiment of Satan, a conception which, it must be confessed, was not belied by his appearance. One play in particular, "Man and Superman," written in 1903 and produced in 1906, was furiously denounced not only for the general countenance it was supposed to give to immorality, but for the topsy-turvydom of the sex relationships it envisaged. You may remember that, following Schopenhauer, it represented woman as in active pursuit of man, who, after ineffectual struggles, succumbs in the end to her superior sex strategy, much as the fly is entrapped in the web of the spider. This notion was regarded at the time as a flagrant contradiction of the facts and an insult to the modesty of women. Quite recently the play, in company with a number of other plays by Mr. Shaw, has been reproduced at the Hampstead Repertory Theatre. It at once became apparent that the mind of the community, upon which the theory expressed in 1906 had been working unconsciously in the interval, had moved up to the level of thought at which the theory had been conceived, with the result that the ideas which had previously been too far in advance of the community to appear even moderately rational, were now accepted as commonplaces with which the audience were only too familiar.

The paradoxical Shaw was in fact merely dull. The inevitable consequence followed: the academic mind at once recognised Shaw as an artist, and began to acclaim the constructive power, the character drawing and the witty dialogue of his plays.

By this token we may know that the message of Shaw has been delivered and that the matter of his play has spent its force. All great art is subjected to this process. It is anathematised when it is new and accepted when it is dull. It has something to say to its own generation which could have no special import for any other, and having said it, subsides into the commonplace. And herein is exemplified the difference between first and second-rate art. The purpose of second-rate art is, as we have seen, to please the senses; hence, until surfeit supervenes, the same stimulus will invariably produce the same effect. But first-rate art loses its effect. Its appeal will vary and diminish with lapse of time, so that heresy becomes platitude and revolutionary thought conventional dogma. Great art is for an age and relative to the purposes of that age: second-rate art can perform its pastrycook's function with equal effect in any age.

This completes what I have to say about the effects of art conceived according to your theory upon readers, spectators and audience. Let us now proceed to consider its effect upon the artist.

Objections to the Application of the Life Force Theory.

Professor Cameron. I really cannot allow you to continue further without interruption. You are sufficiently acquainted with the position I hold to be well aware that your whole attitude can only provoke in me the profoundest disagreement; nor need I enlarge upon that. But some of the statements you have recently made, and the more extreme positions to which the logical development of your fallacious premises has led you, cannot be passed without comment, if this discussion is to retain the form of a discussion instead of degenerating into a monologue.

Anthony. By all means interrupt. I shall be delighted with the opportunity of enlarging upon my theory which criticism will provide.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. Not only is your position open to objections of a general character, some of which I have indicated, but it becomes ludicrously untrue when applied to notoriously great artists.

It is the business of the artist to teach, you say: beauty of form, delineation of character, ingenious contrivance of plot, production of atmosphere, all these are of negligible value, unless a lesson or purpose can be detected in the artist's work. Also you say that, when this alleged teaching has been accepted, art has performed its function and virtue goes out of it. And the theory flatly contradicts the facts. What in the name of goodness I should like to know is the lesson that Edgar Allen Poe has to teach us in his *Tales of Mystery and Imagination?* Where is the propaganda in Jane Austen? The one rouses the emotions of horror, the other portrays with scrupulous fidelity and in perfect taste the manners of English country society. Not a hint of an axe to grind in the work of either! I pitch on these two examples of great artists at random; but they show in what an unfortunate dilemma your theory lands you: either you are compelled to invent some fictitious doctrine with the propagation of which to identify the gentle Jane, or you are compelled to deny that she was great. Each conclusion appears equally absurd.

ANTHONY. Certainly I do not deny the greatness. But I cannot understand your difficulty about the teaching. Take Poe. The world, it is agreed, is full of horror: horrors of war, horrors of industrialism, horrors of cruelty of parents to children, of white men to black men, of men to animals. The normal man is so used to these horrors, his sense of humanity gets so blunted and dulled, not only by custom and familiarity but by outbreaks of legalised cruelty such as the late war, that he scarcely notices their existence. If he does, he cannot but find excuses for what he is used to. Now Poe's tales, by concentrating our attention upon horrors to which we are not accustomed, make us realise the significance of those to which we are. We may say that it is only by presenting the horrible, which is also bizarre, that you excite man's repulsion to the horrible. But once such repulsion has been aroused, it may be excited again by the horrible in whatever form it presents itself, even when it does so in the form to which

habit has accustomed us : and repulsion may result in action to end what repels. It is possible, if not likely, that the effect of Poe may be to quicken what is called the social conscience. We shall protest the more vigorously against cruelty and ugliness wherever we meet them after a reading of his works.

As for Jane Austen, I admit that at the first glance she might well appear the most difficult example of a great artist, from the point of view of my theory, that you could have chosen. She is so pure and passionless, she appears so entirely to accept and approve of the opinions and ways of life of those about her. She was, it would seem, at once the prop and the mirror of the rather limited outlook on the world that was permitted to an English country gentlewoman. But on closer inspection I think that a definite attitude towards this world, if not a deliberate design in its adoption, begins to reveal itself. There is a continual if restrained protest against pretentiousness and hypocrisy in whatever form they are presented. Ostentation and display are everywhere censured, and as you continue your reading of her books you find that there grows upon you, through numberless hints and implications, a consciousness that your author is pleading for greater simplicity and less affectation in contemporary manners and customs. The persons of whom she approves, Elizabeth Bennett, Emma, and Fanny and Edward in *Mansfield Park*, are persons of little or no ceremony : and they share a hatred for the affectation and hollow politeness of others.

Yes, Jane Austen may, I think, be regarded as the satirist of excess, an unconscious subscriber to the Greek doctrine of μηδὲν ἄγαν, who chose to draw her lessons of moderation and simplicity from the portrayal of manners rather than of passions, and to censure an excess of modishness leading to affectation, where others have depicted an excess of feeling leading to disaster.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. As in *Wuthering Heights*, for instance ?

ANTHONY. As in *Wuthering Heights*, where the authoress, following in the footsteps of the Greeks, seems to have wished to show us the Nemesis that waits on unbridled passion, and the mockery of the gods for the ambitions of the self-willed.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. But what can you say of purely

realistic and descriptive works, that yet achieve artistic eminence? Take a work like Doughty's *Arabia Deserta*, a record of travel in a strange land, or Arnold Bennett's *Old Wives' Tale*, which rests content with the portrayal of the most minute incidents in the lives of commonplace persons passed in a commonplace town, eschews comment, draws no moral, and aims solely at painting a complete picture, as it were of still life, for our contemplation. It is a picture too that suggests no questions to the mind of the observer, and most assuredly conveys no lessons: it is like the picture of an interior by a great Dutch artist. And yet the *Old Wives' Tale* is a great work.

ANTHONY. I agree. And works of such a character occupy a very important place in my theory. Take Doughty's *Arabia Deserta*, or if you prefer it, any other of the great Picaresque romances in which the author seasons incident with sage comment upon life. Have they not the power of revealing one to oneself? Do they not tell you something about yourself that you never knew before, so that when such and such an incident is passed in review you say, "Of course that is exactly what I should have felt or said."

Now there is a sense in which all great books have this effect of revealing the reader to himself. In reading, let us say, *Moby Dick*, it is not only the mind of the author with which you become acquainted; you become acquainted with your own, and in enlarging your consciousness of yourself you are at the same time enriching it. For what after all is the object of reading unless it produces some change in you and in your attitude to life, unless it enables you to see in life more scope for your sympathy and understanding, and helps you to bring to it more knowledge both of yourself and of others?

It is a commonplace that a piece of Crown Derby china, which, to the ordinary eye, is merely an inefficiently fragile article of domestic use, reveals to the connoisseur a grace, a beauty, and a delicacy of form and colouring which transports him with modified rapture. The effect of reading great fiction of the realistic type is not dissimilar. Where previously you saw only a drab world peopled by unworthy, uninteresting and middle-class persons, you now behold a world of intensely individual and various human beings, living lives which are

to them the most supremely interesting things in the world, and deriving, like Sophia and Mr. Povey, as much excitement from the unexpected extraction of a loose and aching tooth as Wellington can ever have experienced from his victory at Waterloo.

It is the function of the great artist to communicate this excitement to you: to invest the world of commonplace with the glamour of the unexpected. It is easy enough to idealise things that don't happen; the difficulty is to idealise those that do. And, when the realistic artist succeeds in this achievement, the effect which he produces upon the reader is twofold.

In the first place, by portraying for him the reactions of people similar to himself in situations of the kind which occur in his own life, the artist directs the reader's attention, whether by virtue of the likeness or of the difference of those reactions, to experiences of his own; that is to say, he reveals the reader to himself. Secondly, the reader, in bringing to life a consciousness enriched with this knowledge of the lives and feelings of others, will look out upon the world with a wider sympathy and a deeper understanding, prompting him to assist in the task of removing those anomalies and injustices, whose harsh incidence has occasioned the scope for his sympathy and the need for his understanding.

The Function of Art in Increasing Self-knowledge.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. Yes, I recognise the second of these effects, if indeed it is an effect, as one upon which your theory may legitimately pride itself. But what about the first? What is all this talk about revealing the self to the self, of increasing self-consciousness and so on? It has been slipped in incidentally; yet it savours rather of my view, which insists on a contemplative attitude towards works of art, than of yours, which assesses the value of such works only in relation to their effects on human action? Why after all increase self-knowledge, since the result is usually to diminish efficiency and resolution in action? Need I quote Hamlet?

ANTHONY. No, you need not! I am sorry, though, that I did not announce this inclusion of self-revelation in my scheme with a sufficient flourish of trumpets. But I assure you that

no mental sleight of hand was intended. It is a subject upon which I am reluctant to speak now, since it belongs more properly to the sphere of metaphysics, and would take us far from our present topic.

Let me, however, attempt to justify what I have said by briefly mentioning two ways in which it follows from my theory that increase of self-consciousness is a good, leaving a more detailed discussion of the matter until you join issue with John on questions of philosophy proper. In the first place it was, you will remember, one of the tenets of M. Geley with whose views my friend has largely identified himself, that the main purpose of evolution was to evolve from complete unconsciousness to complete consciousness. This change is effected by a gradual enlargement of the area of consciousness in individuals. The enlargement of consciousness in one incarnation gives rise in the next to the emergence of new faculties and powers, which have been stored in the unconscious during the intervening period. Increase of self-knowledge furthers, therefore, the purpose of evolution.

Secondly, the experimental character of the methods of the Life Force cannot too often be insisted upon. We say that it proceeds by the method of trial and error, but there is a predominance of error. Man appears to be the high-water mark of the Life Force in the way of creative effort up to the present, and man in virtue of his brain may perhaps be regarded by the Force as a source of temporary congratulation. Yet what a wretched brain it is! How it thwarts the purposes of evolution! How it raises up obstructions to itself merely to destroy them! How it refuses to face reality, dressing it up in the trappings of idealism and romance, and then bruising itself against the brick wall it has so striven to disguise! Look at war! The waste, the stupidity, ignorance, cruelty and folly of it! Yet up to the present the main use to which man has put his superior brain is that of perfecting means for the destruction of other men. Hence the necessity for evolving a brain which will be more amenable to the purposes of life and capable of higher powers of organisation in its service. To increase and to perfect the brain is the work of the philosopher, and the method usually adopted hitherto for the achievement of this end is the method of self-contemplation. A mind which

possesses increased knowledge of itself and of its powers may use its knowledge to increase its powers, and the more powerful the mind the more serviceable the weapon.

In these two ways I have endeavoured briefly to indicate the importance of self-knowledge on my theory, and if the theory be admitted, you must, I think, grant the value of that type of art which has the effect of increasing it.

The art I have in mind is, as I have said, the art of the realistic novel as embodied in the works of men like Wells and Bennett, and in a lesser degree of Dickens, of Dumas, and of Thackeray. And with this type of art we may, I think, rank the paintings of the great Dutch school: those pictures of quiet, cool interiors, peopled by everyday men and women engaged in the performance of humdrum tasks in perfect tranquillity and fatuous solemnity. How like ourselves!

Is the Great Artist a Visionary?

Professor Cameron. There may be something to say for this function you ascribe to the realist. But he is after all only an artist in a minor key. The great men of art, the Michelangelos, the Beethovens, the Miltons, the Shelleys and the Dantes were not realists: they cared as little about the details of commonplace lives as they cared to improve or reform those lives by delivering propagandist messages. They were visionaries and dreamers, and in pursuing their shining vision, they created for us a glorified world to which mankind has always been anxious to escape from the sordid worries and cares of the real one.

Meredith's women are like no women who ever lived, and their conversation is impossibly brilliant; but in this very unreality lies the source of their charm. And when Meredith spun these women from the loom of his vivid imagination, he wished only to express in words his vision of the possibilities that were latent in human intercourse, to create glorified beings in a world unlike because more brilliant than his own, but not to mirror his own, nor even, at any rate explicitly, to change it.

The artist in fact, in virtue of his special gifts, sees a vision which is denied to ordinary men. In my view that vision is no fantastic illusion, but a seeing through to the reality that

underlies the world normally presented to our senses. The business of art is simply to express this artist's vision of the real world that lies behind and beyond so that it may be communicable to other men. If the vision is successfully conveyed, it will refine men's understanding, deepen their insight, and enable them to attain to a view of the real which more closely approximates to that of the artist.

In this sense, if you like, the artist is a propagandist, although he has no ulterior purpose in his creations. But you will observe that propagandist or not, and I dislike the word, he is essentially a visionary and dreamer whose eyes are fixed not on appearances but on reality, not on this world but on the next. The artist is, in fact, the bridge that joins the two.

ANTHONY. I am afraid that what you have just said appears to me to embody one of the most profound misapprehensions to which persons who hold your view are liable. The statement that the artist is a visionary or dreamer may be true of second-rate artists, whose only purpose is to entertain. This object they can most easily achieve by providing a refuge from the everyday world, and placing their scene of action, let us say on a South Sea island, or in a Utopia of the future. And there is a sense in which such men, or at any rate the best of them, may be called dreamers. Living in a world of reverie and imagination, they spin from it fantasies and romances which may come to them to seem more real than the world around them. The *Shaving of Shagpat* is such a work, the *Crock of Gold* is another, *Deirdre* another. And since the interest of the author lies in the imaginative world he has created, instead of in the world in which his body lives, he may be called a dreamer in that he dreams away his life. But how profoundly different is the real artist! His dreams of what might be are not valued for themselves, they are valued merely as a means to the modification of what is. For where the romancer is content to dream his life, the real artist insists on living his dreams.

And the true artist has no ideals: he is pulled by no shining vision in whose pursuit his life is spent. He is merely pushed from behind by a creative force which leaves him no option but to do its will. At the bidding of that force he must create and teach. Yet in so doing he can give no conscious or rational

account of his activities. His pictures, his books, his parables and sermons are, in fact, the outcome of an inspiration of which he can give absolutely no account, beyond saying that he has it. Once get it out of your head that the artist is drawn forward by the compelling power of some vision or ideal, once realise that he is pushed from behind instead of being pulled from in front, and many of his characteristics, for which you must be at a loss to account, become immediately explicable.

Thus your great artist is primarily remarkable for his power of seeing reality—and by reality I mean the reality which is known to common-sense—as it is. It is this power which enables him to penetrate current shams and conventions. He possesses the faculty of discerning men's desires, hopes, imaginations and ambitions, under the cloak of hypocrisy with which they are accustomed to conceal themselves from their neighbours. It is from this penetrating vision into the real, this concentration upon the actual, that great artists derive the power they possess of going direct to the truth, and enshrining it in words that are as simple as the truth they convey. Hence the parables of Christ, the short stories of Tolstoy, the sayings of Buddha, which by a homely analogy, a thrust of irony, or a striking image, strip away the husk of convention from life, and bring their hearers face to face with truth. And not only with truth, but with new truth : for these are the men who have the power to open up for mankind new horizons : and they possess this power largely in virtue of their faculty of concentrated vision on the actual.

Take the first great artist in this illustrious line, who, at the bidding of evolution's prompting, opened up new possibilities for the race. The ape, who first abandoned the trees, forewent the use of his tail, gave up his crouching position, and elevated himself from all fours into a precarious eminence on two legs, was making possible the whole subsequent course of human development. Yet he was no idealist. He did not envisage his progeny of Shakespeares and Napoleons, and deny himself the use of his tail to make their existence possible ; he was moved simply by an irresistible push from behind, which made him substitute raw meat for his vegetarian diet. The ape concentrated upon the actual, and, by dint of his superior

power of seeing reality as it was, contrived the necessary measures to effect the substitution while his fellows were still swinging in the trees.

This may be rank, bad biology for all I know, but most decidedly it is the method of the great artist. Christ, Buddha, Marx, Swift, Ibsen, Bunyan, Shaw ; these are the men who have moved and changed the world, and they are no dreamers of dreams. A clear cut and definite vision of the real as it is, is made the basis of an indictment of that real ; this indictment becomes in turn a starting-off point for a description of the remedy which the evil demands, and the account of the remedy is then elaborated into a sketch of the real as it might be. The method, you observe, is as different as possible from that pursued by the artist as you envisaged him. Your artist spins from his own imagination fantasies which have no necessary relation to life, and no object except to delight those who read them : mine uses his peculiarly intense vision of the actual to illumine the path along which the actual may become better than itself. Your artist has no interest in the real : mine has that intense, practical interest which bids him change it. Yours is an idealist : mine is a mere tool. Yours hitches his waggon to a star : mine drives his slowly over the earth, content if he can reach as far as the next field. Yours pleases, mine annoys. Yours is a parasite upon the society that exists, mine is the midwife for the society that is to be.

Thus the great artist, as I conceive him, is at once a photographer and a visionary. But he photographs the real only to show up its defects, and, in so doing, to make men desire something better. That is why the early works of the greatest artists are almost all of an austerely realistic character. The artist is a photographer first, with a penchant for ugly subjects. Why is this ?

Because only the mystic can afford to be a realist. Upon the ordinary man the world impinges closely and harshly : too closely to allow him the capacity, too harshly to permit him the inclination to paint it. We dare not, most of us, paint the world as we see it, for fear of fixing the disagreeable picture permanently on our mind's eye. We desire to escape it, and delight therefore in the works of beauty and romance commended by your theory. It is because we are realists,

our vision being bounded by the actual and our lives confined within the horizon of the commonplace, that in literature and fantasy we seek romance.

But the case of the artist is different. Creating at the behest of some power which he can neither explain nor control, and finding reality in his feeling of oneness with the power that works within him, he can dare to paint the world as he knows it. Instead of being obsessed, overcome, stifled and cloyed with his environment, he knows himself to be independent of it, and can depict it impartially from without. It is because he has a real world of his own in which his inner life is passed, that he can venture without fear of infection accurately to portray that of his fellows. Thus the greatest realistic work proceeds from and is conditioned by the workings of the Force behind evolution, as completely as that work which, more obviously inspired, acts as a signpost to the future.

But I fear that I have once again been led into digression, though, in this case, the fault was yours. You protested that the artist was merely a visionary or dreamer: that his concern was not with the existing world, and that it was absurd therefore to regard him as charged with a conscious mission to change it. I was forced in reply to point to the obvious fact that the great men who had changed the face of society, so far from being visionaries or dreamers, were hard-headed, practical people, gifted with a peculiarly penetrating vision of the present. It is this power of seeing what exists as it is, as much as the capacity for conceiving the future as it might be, which has enabled the greatest artists to appeal to and to move the hearts of men. Yet it must not be supposed that the pitiless realism, which characterises great men, is an expression of something other than the Life Force or that it is self-created. It is, on the contrary, sprung from and dependent upon the continual urge of the Force, since it is only those, who are the servants of a reality more complete than the set of appearances which make up the real for the ordinary man, who have the power and the desire to depict those appearances for what they are. Only the artist who has his own world of romance for escape, can endure to paint the world of the slum and the suburb.

But these remarks were all of them, I am afraid, digressive,

and it is high time to tackle that aspect of our subject, which will, so far as I am concerned, bring our discussion to a close.

MR. BANKS. What may that be? I should have thought that you had already exhausted all that could be said on the relations of the artist to the Life Force.

II. The Effect of Art that Aims at Pleasing upon the Artist.

ANTHONY. Very nearly; but there is one matter that we have still omitted to consider. I have spoken of the effect of art conceived according to the standards of the academic mind upon the reader or spectator: I have still to consider its effect upon the artist, and to suggest by implication the contrary effect of art conceived according to my theory.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. Even on this point little enough remains to be said. We have each described more than once the function and position of the artist in relation to our theories, and we have each failed lamentably to convince the other.

ANTHONY. Yes. But have we mentioned the effect upon the artist of the application of our theories? Come! The point is a new one and is worth considering. I promise you it shall not take us long. We want to describe how the artist whose work is carried out according to your prescription is affected thereby, and for this purpose we will take a concrete instance

Sometime after the beginning of the seventeenth century there was published Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, a work which has been a delight to the academic mind ever since. I need not describe its character, the store of curious knowledge it enshrines, its unblushing digressions, its bookishness, and plundering of mediæval pedants and charlatans for saws and recipes, moral maxims and political platitudes, entomological observations and mythological science. What is important for my purpose is that this book, a famous and a great book by most standards, took Burton between twenty and thirty years to write; and the writing of it is usually considered to be an achievement of which any man would be proud. I say usually, because on my theory it is obvious that such a work can possess little value. It sheds no new light upon problems of morals, of politics, or of human relationship;

it is not in any sense original; it is rather a museum of the past, into which the author has striven to pack all the curiosities of thought and feeling which unremitting research has revealed to him. In a word, it looks backward instead of forward. Clearly a book, to which only those who believe the value of knowledge to be permanent, even when that knowledge dissolves on examination into myth, can apply the epithet great.

Upon the compilation of such a work, then, according to your theory, but not according to mine, the author should have spent happy years of pride and effort, knowing that he was handing down to posterity an imperishable storehouse of curious lore and out-of-the-way learning.

What are the facts? It so happens that Burton has strangely impregnated this mass of accumulated detail which forms the *Anatomy* with the flavour of his own personality; and it is probably this personal element, which runs through the whole like a single thread in a parti-coloured web, which has so endeared the work to subsequent scholars. What does it reveal? A fine, magnanimous spirit chafing at the waste of his own life. A disappointed idealist who, finding that the world offers no better scope for his talents than in the collection of the rubbish of antiquity, has recourse, after the habit of such men, to a soured cynicism which his natural kindliness renders difficult to maintain. He is an educated man; he has knowledge, talents and attainments, but he cannot avoid the belief, my belief mark you, that it is the business of knowledge, talents and attainments to make some practical difference in the world, to improve the material welfare of mankind, to diminish the popular ignorance. And because he cannot avoid this belief, he rails against the useless pedantry to which he is condemned. For he has no illusions about his own work: he is fully conscious of the futility of the huge labour he has undertaken, and the resentment which he feels against the destiny which confines him to the sterile, intensive culture of the University, when he might be spreading the light of his attainments in the world, is sufficiently marked to justify the belief that the *Melancholy* his mighty volume is chiefly concerned to dissect is his own.

Now I maintain that this state of mind in Burton, and

more especially this attitude to his work, sprang directly from the consciousness of waste on the part of a creative mind condemned by circumstances to sterility——

PROFESSOR CAMERON. May I ask what is your evidence for the extreme melancholy you attribute to Burton? I always thought of him as a genial, happy, kindly old soul.

ANTHONY. You would; your theory requires it. But the evidence is scattered everywhere through his own work. I have a copy here. Listen for instance to this: "We that are University men, like so many hide-bound calves in a pasture, tarry out our time, wither away as a flower ungathered in a garden, and are never used; or, as so many candles, illumine ourselves alone, obscuring one another's light, and are not discerned here at all, the least of which translated to a dark room or some country benefice where it might shine apart, would give a fair light and be seen over all."

Now I maintain that this complaint of Burton's was typical of the *malaise* that affects all men of creative spirit, who, being condemned to the academic life, find their creative inspiration confined within the boundaries set by the academic mind. The academic mind breeds a fear of life, especially of what is new in life, and many a don, who chooses to purchase security at the expense of adventure, finds to his cost that he has atrophied his creative powers, violated his artistic conscience, and doomed his efforts to futility. In Burton's case the inhibitions demanded by the circumstances of his life amounted almost to what the psychoanalyst would term a complex: he wished to marry, but he could not; he wished to travel, but he dared not; above all he longed for free, mental adventure and speculation, that the power, which he felt continuously urging him forward, might be given its chance through experiment to bring forth something new into the world; yet he was obliged by the hostility of the academic mind to waste his talents and his energy in poking about among the rubbish of the past, and by perpetuating those idle thoughts of antiquity which men had long since outgrown, to erect a barrier against the newer manifestations of that Force, into whose service it was his inmost wish to enter. For men have for three centuries tumbled over themselves in admiration of the *Anatomy*. Because of Burton's *Anatomy* much energy and interest have

been abstracted from the service of the Life Force; men's vision of the future has been dimmed by their delight in the past, and new works have come still-born into the world for lack of recognition and encouragement. The *Anatomy of Melancholy* is a monument to a pitiful lack of true occupation, and its completion produced in its author no feeling but that of contempt for its futility. The production of what is merely learned or merely beautiful is, I feel assured, inevitably attended by such feelings. The production of beauty or learning for their own sake has mainly flourished in ages of decay, such as the present, when the size of the State offered no opportunity for effective action in the world of affairs. During the profound peace that characterised the Roman Empire after the death of Trajan, men lost interest in the world of politics and action, and turned for a substitute to the cultivation and enjoyment of beauty. A few years before the circle of Pliny the Younger and his friends had asked nothing better than to retire from public life and edit the poets. To-day again the State has grown too big to admit of effective influence by individuals, and the machinery of administration too complex to permit of intervention by outsiders. What happens is the result less of individual will and effort than of the interplay of economic forces, whose genesis escapes detection and whose workings and conclusions escape control. In such a posture of affairs the popular ear is captivated by the loudest voice, the popular eye by the crudest design. For the intricacies, the complexities, the dignity and labour of real statesmanship there is no place, and the best men turn sick at heart from public affairs to seek dignity and retirement in literature and art. But art produced under such circumstances fails to achieve greatness for two reasons. In the first place, a fatalistic attitude towards the world and the forces which condition events is not compatible with great art. The production of great art requires faith in the possibility of change and improvement, and a belief that such change can be effected by human will and effort. The burning indignation that produced *Gulliver's Travels*, the shining vision that illumines *Pilgrim's Progress* or *News from Nowhere*, do not spring from a belief in the impotence of man to control his fate. For the Life Force implants in those it has specially chosen to give expression

to its purpose a belief that mankind will not in the long run prove deaf to their words. Apathy and indifference spring from Fatalism, not from creative force.

In the second place, art which is cultivated as a second string, revenges itself by remaining second-rate. Where, as in the modern state, men of conspicuous talent and wide social interests are denied a place of influence in the world of affairs, and endeavour to console themselves with the cultivation of their senses and the production of beauty, the type of art which results lacks both inspiration and originality.

Such men produce dainty lyrics, comedies of manners, *belles lettres* and realistic fiction. These works set the taste for their age: their influence and example call into being a host of imitators, who strive to exhibit their good taste by cultivating the style of art that has been made fashionable by the elect. Thus the art of a whole age may be minor. The main characteristic of such art is directly derivable from the circumstances which gave it birth. Where the world of action rebuffs the efforts of those who desire to mould the course of events, they turn perforce to the world of personal relations and intrigue: when external things prove unamenable to control and appear to move in obedience to laws whose operations are inevitably determined, interest in the external fades and is replaced by interest in the self. Introspection takes the place of action, and objective art which concentrates upon the world gives way to subjective art which is concerned only to express the self.

These, then, are the characteristics of modern art, and they are equally prominent wherever you choose to look. Modern poetry is subjective: it is written as a *divertissement* to immortalise a mood or to crystallise a caprice, rather than under the compulsion of an all-constraining force. Lyrics, which should spring from an absorbed self-forgetfulness, are written in a rapture of self-consciousness. The sensibilities rather than the passions of the writer are presented for our interest, and poems of revolutionary or erotic ardour give place to records of impressions produced by a rainbow or a ribbon. Modern poetry is in fact written by men to be read by women.

In fiction the modern novel substitutes for the record of objective fact the recital of the sensations experienced by the

hero, or more usually the heroine. Plot has been long abandoned, but even character-drawing is now thought unnecessary, except in so far as a cinematographic presentation of all the moods, feelings and thoughts of the author, a presentation which is not subjected to censorship, to selection or to arrangement, may be ranked as a form of character delineation. The novel has in fact become a shop window in which temperamental young misses may exhibit their emotions duly labelled, ticketed and appraised for the degustation of the public.

Music is tainted with the same subjectivity. Until the middle of the nineteenth century people held that it was the business of music to be beautiful, and there is little doubt that they were right. Then, under the influence of Wagner, dramatic music supplanted pattern music, and the function of music was mainly held to be the expression or communication. of emotion. It is only in the twentieth century, however, that composers have tacitly agreed to proceed upon the assumption that the emotions to be communicated are their own. As these are rarely beautiful, it is not to be expected that the music which is designed to represent them should be remarkable either for harmony or for melody: it is not, and, as a result, modern compositions are to be commended neither on your theory nor on mine, since the musical embodiment of bad temper or eroticism is neither permanently valuable as a work of beauty, nor particularly compelling (except perhaps by way of warning) as a work of propaganda.

As for modern painting, it has long ceased to attempt to depict the external world. It does, presumably, depict something that is going on inside the artist's head; but whether this occurrence is an idea in the mind caused by the stimulus of some external object, or whether it is a relation between the idea and the object, or whether it is spontaneously generated is a question belonging to the Theory of Knowledge, which it would take us too far from our path to pursue here. Besides I grow tired of talking and want to finish.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. Personally I think it is spontaneously generated.

ANTHONY. Why?

PROFESSOR CAMERON. Because of its complete unlikeness

to anything in the visible world. A modern picture is only called " Portrait of Mrs. Jones," or " Blast Furnaces at Stoke," and called either indifferently, because modern artists are very conventional and still believe it to be necessary to name a picture after some external object, as though the picture represented it, instead of calling it " My ill temper," or " My desire for a virgin," or whatever the real subject may be.

ANTHONY. Probably that is the explanation: but you agree on the main point, which is that the tendency of modern art is to be subjective.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. Certainly I do.

ANTHONY. Now I maintain that this tendency springs directly from the fact that such art is embraced as a diversion, as a second string; it is so embraced, partly because it is fashionable, partly because the artist can find no place for his energies in politics and affairs. In any event, art of this type is in no sense an embodiment of the inspiration of the Life Force. It is the art of amateurs produced for dilettantes. Men and women write not because they must, but because, like the people who appear in Tchekov's plays and stories, or in Shaw's *Heartbreak House,* they believe in the cult of art for its own sake, or as a means to the attainment of happiness and beauty. And they pursue happiness and beauty directly, because they are denied by circumstances the opportunity of pursuing anything better worth having: they are compelled to make of personal relationships an end and of their own feelings an interest in life, because they have no ends and interests to serve in the outside world.

Art of this type is valueless from the point of view of the Life Force, because it is stationary, or, perhaps I should say, circular. Instead of aiming at changing the world, it aims only at expressing the self: instead of acting as a signpost to the possible, it is only a mirror of the actual. When it should perform the function of true culture which is to bring to birth what is new, it gives consciousness only of what has already been achieved. For these reasons, then, I believe that the art which seeks to express the self, equally with the art which aims solely at creating beauty, fails to serve the purposes of the Life Force. The first is circular; the second is static; neither represents an advance.

And, that I may return to my final theme, the effect of such art upon the artist is always in a greater or less degree what it was upon Burton. Where the true artist loses himself in the Force which bears him on, the scholar, the pedant, the realist, and the pretty-pretty poet only become the more conscious of themselves. Where the true artist uses art to lift up his thought out of the selfish, little pit of vanity and desire which is himself, into that greater self which is the all-embracing Force, the second-rater regards it as a device for perpetuating his vanities and enshrining his desires. If art is so used, it will be found that the pursuit of beauty, like the pursuit of pleasure, ends in intolerable boredom, and that the expression of the self for self-expression's sake is but another name for servitude to the self.

To escape this fate the artist must have at bottom an insight and a vision into the Universe as a whole. He must possess a profound consciousness both of the meaning and of the purpose of the Universe, and his writing must be, from first to last, nothing but the attempt to give expression to such consciousness with the intent that others may share it. And the value of what he will have to say depends wholly and entirely upon the extent to which his works embody some prompting of the Life Force. If the artist by his work helps forward the purpose of evolution, he is a great artist, if not, he is a mere entertainer. Beyond this nothing matters.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. And do I understand you to deny completely the value of beauty and form, style and diction, except as means to the better communication of this message you hold to be so important, and as means which, though useful are by no means necessary? Have you no place for culture and good taste as things valuable in themselves; and have not beauty and form at least a value relative to the good taste which appreciates them?

ANTHONY. Yes, I have a place for good taste and for culture: they possess the value and perform the function of manure. The mind which has been impregnated with all that is best in literature, the eye that can recognise beauty in pictorial art, the ear that is sensitive to beautiful sounds, are like a richly cultivated soil. Such a soil should be more ready to receive the seed of a new thought, and more capable

of giving it nurture until the time of fruition arrives. Thus it is to the cultivated mind that we should look to provide the most suitable environment for the growth into consciousness of the seed implanted by the Life Force in the unconscious. And when the seed in the unconscious has grown and taken shape in the conscious as a definite conception of the direction in which mankind should travel, it still remains to give that conception concrete form in words, or paint, or music, that there may be communicated to the consciousness of mankind the message of which the artist is the chosen vehicle. And herein lies the function of technique. That the artist may adequately express his vision, that he may give it material substance which will at once appeal and attract, it is desirable that he should possess a mastery over all the mysteries and secrets of his art. The writer should possess a flow of words, a sense of style, a feeling for form, the musician a knowledge of harmony and counterpoint, the painter of draughtmanship and the properties of colours.

All these things, then, are important but they are not indispensable, and I have in my exposition tended rather to keep th m in the background, just because these secondary things have come so often, under the influence of the academic mind, to usurp the place of the primary thing, the adjuncts of art to be mistaken for its purpose.

But I have dwelt sufficiently often upon the dangers that attend the subordination of matter to form, and there is little fear that in now mentioning the importance of form and technique I shall be misunderstood. They have their place, but it is not the first place.

MR. BANKS. Which is ?

ANTHONY. The persistent striving of the Life Force for more life, more power, more understanding, more consciousness. The creation of the artist as its mouthpiece and of mankind as its instrument. The conception by the artist of something better than what exists, and the rendering in material form of his conception. And, finally, the attempt to bring into being something higher and nobler than what is and the persistent effort to remove from the path whatever stands in the way of its realisation.

CHAPTER V

KNOWLEDGE AND FACT IN A WORLD OF CHANGE

Scope of the Discussion.

ANTHONY. Good morning, gentlemen. I hope you have brought to this morning's discussion minds refreshed by a good night's sleep.

MR. BANKS. Thank you, we slept well, and it is as well that we did. We have need of clear brains, for this morning, if I am not mistaken, we are to penetrate to the heart of philosophy.

JOHN. Well, scarcely that perhaps; but it is true that our subject this morning may prove a little abstruse. Certain fundamental questions were perpetually thrusting themselves forward during Anthony's discussion with Professor Cameron, and urgently demanding solution. It is these questions which I should like to tackle before you go away. It was seen, I think, that many of my friend's positions were only valid on the assumption of premises which it was beyond his immediate purpose to discuss, and which accordingly were continually being referred to me or postponed until the morrow. It also became pretty clear that the assumption of these premises involved the adoption of a somewhat extreme position in philosophy, which we were certainly not entitled to take for granted, while a failure to assume them lead to inconsistency in the general thesis of the Life Force which I had outlined to Mr. Banks, and left my friend's theories of education and of art standing without support, a mere intellectual castle in the air, liable at any moment to be overturned through lack of foundation.

ANTHONY. You are a little hard on my poor efforts, friend John, seeing that you inspired them.

JOHN. I did not mean to be. I think we shall be able

to lay your foundations for you with a little care and patience ; but it would have been better had we laid them first. Professor Cameron, you know, has some cause to blaspheme. He asked you a number of very awkward questions about absolute knowledge and changeless fact at the beginning of your discussion on the function of education, which you have entirely failed to answer. They were perfectly legitimate questions, and unless we know the general tenor of our reply we may as well abandon the Life Force theory altogether.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. I hope that you will make an attempt to deal with them now.

JOHN. That is, as I understand it, the purpose of our discussion. But the subject is not an easy one, and although I shall endeavour to make what I have to say as untechnical as possible, I take this opportunity of warning Mr. Banks that he will probably be bored to extinction.

MR. BANKS. Do you suggest, sir, that my intelligence is not capable of following your reasoning ?

JOHN. Not at all : but it is a case of being familiar with the particular kind of language in which philosophers talk. I am afraid that, in the interests of brevity, I may occasionally slip in words with a technical significance, without first explaining the sense in which they are being used. Philosophy often appears to be more difficult than it is, not because of the nature of its subject-matter, but because of the professional method of treating it.

MR. BANKS. If you become obscure I will ask for enlightenment.

JOHN. Very well ! Then I will proceed at once to the difficulties which have been, as it were, implicit throughout the whole course of the previous discussions. These difficulties were numerous enough ; but there appear to me to be two main difficulties into one or other of which all the others resolve themselves, and they are these.

How can Knowledge be Possible and Reality be Real ?

If the fundamental principle of the Universe, or at any rate of the non-material Universe, is change, how is it possible that there should exist in the first place absolute knowledge, by which I mean knowledge which is entirely true, and in

the second place, absolute fact, by which I mean fact which is entirely real and which remains eternally the same for us to know? I think, Professor Cameron, you would grant that most of the difficulties which you found in the assumptions underlying Anthony's exposition, would be considerably relieved if I could suggest a satisfactory answer to these two questions.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. Certainly they would. It is, I think, essential that you should account for the possibility of knowledge, by which I mean true knowledge, on your theory; since not only do we appear to possess such knowledge, as for instance our knowledge of mathematical propositions to which I have already referred, but if we do not, we can have no ground for ever preferring one hypothesis to another, we cannot know that any hypothesis is true, and there can be no meaning in the word truth. In this event your own theory will fall to the ground among others, since if knowledge does not exist, that particular form of it in which the Life Force theory professes to express itself, is no more knowledge than any other knowledge. Again, if there is no such thing as truth, the Life Force theory cannot be true, or rather, to put it in another way, if we concentrate upon your statement that change is the fundamental reality of the Universe, the Life Force theory is no sooner true—if it is true—than it changes, that is to say, it becomes some other theory and therefore, presumably, ceases to be true.

Therefore, if your own theory is not to be reduced to a meaningless succession of phrases, you must provide me with a ground for the possibility of knowledge and also with a meaning for truth.

As for permanent fact, it is clear, as Plato would put it, that true knowledge must be of something. That something must be real, for you cannot have true knowledge of that which is not. In order to be real, it must subsist through change. Therefore you must, it seems to me, demonstrate somewhere or somehow the existence of an unchanging reality, which remains the same in spite of change, in order that you may predicate change of it. For, in the last resort, it is only the unchanging which can change. There must, in fact, be something which changes, which is other than the changes it under-

goes, something in which the changes can take place; and since that something is other than change, it must be changeless reality. It is of this reality, then, it would seem, that there must be true knowledge, and it is this reality that you must establish. And all these things you must do within the framework of your Life Force hypothesis.

JOHN. Yes, it is not an easy task: in fact to perform all that you require of me is entirely beyond my powers. You put problems that have puzzled all philosophers, and have been successfully solved by none, as if they applied in a special and peculiar sense to my philosophy. Why, for instance, should I be called upon to elucidate the difficulties propounded by the Greeks about being and becoming, about knowledge and probable opinion?

PROFESSOR CAMERON. Because, as far as I can see, your hypothesis must involve the denial of the fact of knowledge. If everything changes, knowledge must change: no knowledge therefore remains permanently true, and, if it is not permanently true, it is not knowledge. Further, if our minds are instruments created for the performance of a purpose, knowledge which is the peculiar emanation of mind must itself be relative to the purpose for which it has been evolved. It must therefore be infected with the relativity that attaches to whatever is a means to an end and not an end in itself.

But if you cheerfully face these conclusions, if, in fact, you deny knowledge, then your position is exposed to that oldest and simplest of objections, which Aristotle brought against the Megarians: the objection, namely, that knowledge is affirmed in the very fact of its denial. You cannot assert that there is no such thing as knowledge, for knowledge is involved in your assertion, the knowledge, namely, that there is no such thing as knowledge. If it is true that there is no knowledge, then you cannot know that there is not: hence there always may be knowledge, and your so-called knowledge that knowledge is impossible subsides into an improbable belief.

JOHN. Yes, I know, I know. But your last remark gives me my loophole. It is possible to assert that there may be knowledge without asserting that there is knowledge; it is also possible to hold that although knowledge

may exist, we can never know that we have it: we may, in fact, have to stop at beliefs, which must remain beliefs, just because they can never be verified: and it may be that the Life Force hypothesis is itself a belief of this kind. I am saying this now as an indication of the line I should feel compelled to adopt if I were approaching this subject from the old logical standpoint. But you know how barren this approach has been in the past, leading as it does either to the empty void of the Absolute, or to the unhelpful scepticism of the Pragmatists.

If you will permit me, therefore, I should like to consider the questions you have raised from an entirely different standpoint, by making an excursion into modern psychology. I hope that the results of this excursion may enable me to suggest a certain point of view on these logical matters which will be not inconsistent with the premises of the Life Force which my friend and I have assumed.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. Tackle the question I have put from any angle you like, if you think that you are more likely to arrive at a solution. Personally I should not have thought that a flank attack through psychology would overcome the logical barrier which at present blocks your road. However, proceed as you will.

The Pooling of Knowledge.

JOHN. I will begin with a few words, by way of introduction, as it were, upon a tendency in modern thought with the spirit of which I should like to identify myself. It may be described as the tendency to break through partitions. Up to very recent times we have seen groups of learned enquirers pursuing their own special branches of study as though each branch were distinct and separate. Mathematicians, physicists, psychologists, and physiologists, have lived in water-tight compartments which permitted no interchange of communication. Each science has followed its own line of enquiry, reached its own conclusions and assumed its own hypotheses, without stopping to check conclusions or to verify hypotheses with reference to the others. Philosophy alone was supposed to take all knowledge for its

province, and as a punishment for its arrogance, was convicted of failure to show definite results in any province.

In particular, physics and psychology proceeded on parallel lines which seemed fated never to intersect. Physics was supposed to study the properties of matter, psychology the properties of mind, and mind and matter being regarded as distinct, it was taken for granted that neither science had anything to learn from the other. Now it is just this distinction between mind and matter and between the sciences which deal with them, which is becoming increasingly open to question; and it is with this questioning that I wish, at any rate in part, to identify myself.

MR. BANKS. But, when discussing Bergson and Geley, you insisted on a fundamental dualism, and fell foul of them both just because they endeavoured to resolve matter into mind by finding a common source for both matter and mind.

JOHN. That is true enough. But the uniformity to which I am now referring is not a uniformity either of mind or matter, nor does it seek to resolve either into the other. Nor, mark you, am I necessarily committing myself to the conclusion that there is only one thing in the Universe. I am only affirming my sympathy with a certain method of approach to certain problems.

This method I will now try to outline.

As I have just hinted, the tendency of those who have sought for unity in the world in the past has been to achieve it by eliminating either mind or matter, thus bringing all existence under one common formula. Philosophers on the whole have endeavoured, under the name of Idealism, to rid the world of matter: everything is mind, they have asserted, and this mind taken as a whole has been termed God or the Absolute, according as the philosopher in question has a need to believe in the conclusion of his reasoning, or is satisfied with the reasoning which establishes his conclusions. Scientists on the whole have endeavoured to belittle mind both by denying its efficacy and by restricting its scope, while extreme views throw doubt on the very existence of mind as a unique and unanalysable entity, and endeavour to explain it away as a rarefied form of matter.

Recent developments have proceeded on somewhat different

lines. In the first place, matter, under the influence of modern physics, has been growing less material. Objects are not lumps of solid matter, but logical constructions denoting the relations normally subsisting between what the physicist calls "events," and changing according to the changes in these relations. In the second place, mind, under the influence of modern psychology, has been growing less mental. The Behaviourists assert that the sum total of our knowledge of a man is that which can be obtained from observation of his physical Behaviour: observation of actions is the basis of knowledge: knowledge of a mind behind these actions is mere inference, and inference which, by its very nature, can never be tested. Now once matter and mind have lost their most salient characteristics, the partitions between the pigeon holes in which they have hitherto been separately studied are in a fair way to being broken down. As a result there emerges a new and more fundamental science which takes as its subject of enquiry neither matter nor mind, but certain fundamental particulars which the physicists call events, to which I should like to apply the epithet neutral to indicate the fact of their priority to both matter and mind. From these events both matter and mind are constructed. Arrange these particulars in one context, and you have matter; arrange them in another, and you have mind. But the fundamental stuff from which both matter and mind are manufactured is the same.

Now this attempt to build a bridge between psychology and physics, with its insistence on the homogeneity of the stuff which both sciences study, has been considerably furthered by the recent work of Mr. Bertrand Russell. His book, *The Analysis of Mind*, has suggested most of what I am going to say, and the method which I propose to follow in considering the problems you raised is the radically empirical and psychological method adopted in that book.

The conclusions I have just indicated as to the homogeneous stuff from which matter and mind are constructed, conclusions which are also Mr. Russell's, are to be regarded as strictly outside our immediate purpose. I only mentioned them in passing, in order to give in a few words as complete a summary as possible of the so-called "psychologising"

tendency in modern thought, which I am proposing to follow, at any rate as regards its method, in discussing the difficulties you have raised. The abolition of pigeon-holes will also enable me to treat in the same way and from the same point of view the two different questions you have put to me, the first as regards the nature of knowledge, which I propose to treat as a question not of logic but of psychology, the second as regards the nature of change and reality, which I propose to regard as a question not of metaphysics but of physics. Let me take these questions separately.

I. The Analysis of Thought.

You have asked me how truth is possible if we assume my premises which assert the existence of a Life Force whose function it is continually to change. Now truth I take to be a property of judgment, or if you like, of knowledge; facts are real and judgments are true. How then is it possible to have knowledge of fact such that it remains true permanently and absolutely, and not temporarily and relatively, relatively, that is to say, in the sense that truth may be relative to the achievement of some temporary purpose of the Life Force? You agree with this statement of the question?

PROFESSOR CAMERON. You have stated it correctly.

JOHN. Let us consider, then, for a moment what is to be said for the existence of knowledge or thought itself from the Behaviourist point of view. The Behaviourists, as I said just now, believe that nothing can be known about human psychology except what can be observed. Psychology for them is the study of what we do; and what we do can, on this view, be completely explained in terms of bodily movement and bodily change. Thought may, of course, take place; the existence of thought is, in fact, an assumption which cannot be ruled out of court; but, inasmuch as no factors are needed to explain human behaviour other than observable bodily movements, it is an assumption which it is unnecessary to make. If there really is something in thought other than and additional to observable bodily movements (and by observable is meant theoretically observable), it is a something of which we can never have knowledge, and may safely be ignored. It is inevitable, therefore, that the Behaviourist

should be sceptical about the existence of thought and should regard it as at best an inference from observed behaviour; and it is an inference which it is more prudent not to make.

This view sprang originally from the observation of the behaviour of animals. When we examine the behaviour of animals, our interpretation of the phenomena they present is not biassed by the initial presumption that animals must have minds, a presumption which human conceit has hitherto required us to make when considering our own actions. Thus, we are quite prepared to believe that, when a dog hoards or buries a bone, he does not necessarily reflect that he may be hungry at the same time to-morrow, and that the bone will come in handy then; on the contrary, we incline naturally enough to the view that the dog's activity is dictated solely by the promptings of instinct. He may, of course, reflect on the matter, but his reflection, if it occurs, is a mere inference from his behaviour on the part of the observer, an inference which experiments on animals have increasingly shown to be superfluous.

The next step taken by the Behaviourists is to apply this method of accounting for the actions of animals to the behaviour of human beings. It is surprising to find how far the method may be pushed. On analysis it will be found that a very considerable proportion of our actions can be explained as automatic reactions to stimulus, and such actions do not involve the intervention of thought at any point to explain their occurrence. In many cases this is obvious. Name an object in the presence of a child, and when he is again brought into contact with the same, or with a similar object, he will pronounce the appropriate word in designation of it. This does not mean that a process of intellectual recognition has taken place. The child's behaviour—in this case, the enunciation of a word—may be explained as an automatic reaction to the same stimulus as that which was applied when the object was first named in his hearing. The repeated application of the stimulus leads to the formation by means of association of what is called a language habit, which prompts the child to pronounce the name of the object whenever he is brought into contact with it. More complicated cases are treated on the same principle. If a child gives an answer

in mental arithmetic correctly, all that has happened, on the Behaviourist view, is that he has acquired a complicated language habit, which results in the automatic production of the sounds which make up the words, " forty-nine," whenever the stimulus of the question, " What is seven times seven ? " is applied. Once again there is no necessity to assume thought, since the thought cannot be observed.

Mr. Banks. But surely this is a little unnecessary. What on earth is the good of taking all this trouble to prove that thought may not occur in certain cases, when it is beyond all question in others ? I myself am no great thinker, yet I am frequently conscious of the process of thought going on in my own brain. When you sit down and balance alternative courses of action, when you do a sum in arithmetic, when you calculate the amount of your change or the population of a town, when you even decide which of two hotels to stay at for the week-end, you are not only thinking, but conscious of thinking. I am, for instance, clearly aware of my own thought processes in following your exposition of the absurd proposition that thought processes do not exist.

John. Ah, you mean knowledge by introspection. Now the Behaviourists deny absolutely that such knowledge exists. According to them it is not possible to obtain knowledge of the self by a special method, namely, the method of introspection, which is different from that by which you acquire knowledge of other people. You can know more about yourself than about other people, because you have greater opportunities for observing your own activities ; but this knowledge is the same kind of knowledge as that which you have of others. As it is not possible to observe oneself thinking, in the sense in which one observes an actual physical process, introspection does not, it is asserted, in itself provide evidence for thought.

I want you to understand that I am simply stating this view, and not attempting to give you arguments in its favour. It will be seen shortly that I do not accept it in its entirety. Meanwhile I am summarising it because, with suitable modifications, it provides the basis of the view of knowledge I am going to suggest.

Mr. Banks. It all seems rather nonsensical on the face

of it. But even if I am not permitted to have knowledge by introspection, surely I am conscious of my thinking as an ordinary mental process.

JOHN. It is possible; but unfortunately even the existence of consciousness is impugned by the Behaviourists.

MR. BANKS. Surely not!

Does Consciousness Exist?

JOHN. It is, I assure you. But the denial of consciousness as a unique and separate mental phenomenon is of much older date than the Behaviourists. William James began it with his famous phrase, "the thoughts themselves are the thinkers," a phrase which was intended to imply the view that there is no static, independent ego, which thinks the thoughts that occur and is something separate from and other than these thoughts. There is simply a stream of experience, and though this experience may be conscious, in the sense that it is conscious of the objects before it and of preceding sections of the stream, it is not itself an experience of which a self, which may be described as having the experience, is conscious. But, having once eliminated the independent, permanent ego (whose sole function is to be conscious) and left only a stream of experience, James was enabled in a later stage of his philosophy to dispense with consciousness altogether, on the ground that some experiences were unconscious, and consciousness was not therefore a necessary concomitant of experience. He proceeded therefore to assert that there was no fundamental, mental stuff called consciousness in the world out of which mind was formed, such that, whenever mind was engaged in any activity such as thinking, it could be said that the individual must be conscious of the activity, on the ground that consciousness is an inseparable accompaniment of *every* mental activity.

The argument is largely based on the lack of evidence for a bare act of consciousness, e.g. an act of thinking or of desiring, which is additional to or other than the content of the thought or the desire in question. Thus a feeling of pleasure cannot be analysed into (1) a consciousness of feeling, and (2) the pleasure feeling which is the content of the consciousness, (1) being of such a character that it is precisely

the same activity as the equivalent act (1) in a similar analysis of a feeling of pain. The truth is that the feeling of pleasure is the consciousness of the feeling and constitutes, therefore, a different experience from the feeling of pain. Thus, if we are unable on analysis to discover a conscious self which thinks and desires, and which is in some mysterious way responsible for the thinking and desiring and yet independent of it, the accurate way of describing what occurs when these phenomena take place would be to say " there is a thinking," " there is a desiring," etc.

Many desires, you see, have been shown by your old love, psychoanalysis, to be unconscious desires. If, then, it is possible to desire objects of which we are not conscious, the question arises whether consciousness of the object of desire is ever necessary to enable the fact of desire to take place. I shall have more to say about desire later, but for the present I mention the fact of unconscious desire only to show that consciousness, so far from being an inalienable accompaniment of all our emotional and mental processes, is at best an irrelevant and incidental concomitant of those processes, whose absence or presence is not by any means necessary to their occurrence.

I have not time to go further into this question, but I think I have said sufficient to show that, on Behaviourist premises, mind as such, and knowledge, which is usually regarded as the peculiar emanation of mind, cannot be certainly known to exist. Mind is, in fact, reduced to a mere register of external stimuli, which are called sensations: each stimulus produces its appropriate bodily reaction, which expresses itself in the movements whether of throat or limbs, which the Behaviourist observes. Psychology is, you see, in a fair way to being merged in physiology, just as chemistry has been merged in physics. In the last resort, it is suggested that all thought is a mere disturbance of bodily substance, on the ground that every sensation produces a slight modification in nervous tissue, and that every so-called thought is in essence simply a form of the resultant sensation. Thus the whole apparatus of conscious, mental life can be resolved into physiological modifications of the brain and nerves, which, if our powers of observation and opportunities for investi-

gation were sufficiently good, could be duly observed and noted down.

I think, however, that Behaviourism, which possesses the seductive simplicity which attaches to all extreme views, is just a little too simple: in its desire to analyse and resolve away it has rather overshot the mark. Although it is true that there is remarkably little in our mental life which cannot be explained by language habits and other associated habits, it does seem to be a fact that it contains at least one ingredient which is revealed by introspection, but which cannot be detected by outside observers: this ingredient is constituted by the existence of mental images.

Mr. Russell, to whose book I referred before, parts company with the Behaviourists, who strenuously deny the existence of images, on this point. It seems to be true of images (*a*) that we do possess them; (*b*) that they are different from the sensations which are alone recognised by the Behaviourists. Their chief differences from sensations are causal. They are excited not by external stimuli but by other sensations, while their effects are limited to the world of psychology, and do not extend, as do the effects of sensations, into the physical world. The existence of images is a highly controversial question into which I cannot enter now; but assuming for the moment that we disregard the Behaviourists to the extent of admitting their existence—an admission which I am sure, Professor Cameron, you would not be reluctant to make—we can proceed with Mr. Russell to analyse all mental phenomena into sensations and images suitably related.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. That sounds a rather bold statement. Is there nothing in thought, for instance, save sensations and images?

The Analysis of Thought into Sensations and Images.

JOHN. That is Mr. Russell's contention, and I admit that at first sight it is a little startling. Let us, however, take any accredited mental phenomenon at random and see into what constituents it can be analysed: take consciousness, for instance, upon whose existence we were throwing doubt a few moments ago. I propose simply to specify the con-

stituents into which the various, mental phenomena are analysed, without going into Mr. Russell's reasons for his view. It is admitted, you will remember, that consciousness *may* occur as a concomitant of sensations and images; what is denied is that consciousness is a necessary concomitant of them. When consciousness does occur, it may be consciousness of our own mental states, or a consciousness of external objects. In the first place, then, consciousness of a sensation, for example, appears to be constituted by a mental image of the sensation of which there is consciousness, accompanied by a belief that the image is a sign of something other than itself. Consciousness of so-called external objects. . . .

PROFESSOR CAMERON. But you have already introduced a constituent in your mental process which is neither an image nor a sensation, namely, belief. What is belief?

JOHN. I will endeavour to analyse belief in a moment. Consciousness of so-called external objects, as I was saying, may be resolved into the occurrence of sensations and images of the object, accompanied by a belief in the existence of the object to which the sensations and images relate. As regards the belief in the existence of the object, Mr. Russell points out that its character is normally that of a belief that certain sensations will occur in the future if the object is approached in such a way as would normally cause those sensations to occur, as for instance, if we touch an assumed object, or hear a noise when it is rapped. In order, however, to avoid the anomaly involved in the assumption that we can be conscious of what does not exist, it is required that the belief in question should be a true belief.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. But what is a true belief on these premises? You keep using words you have not explained.

JOHN. I am coming to the question of truth very shortly. All this is merely preliminary, to illustrate the method pursued, and the way in which the analysis of mind into sensations and images is carried out. Let us take one more instance, that of memory.

Memory is constituted by the occurrence of the image of a past event, accompanied by a certain kind of belief as to the object of the image. The particular form of belief in question is characterised by a special kind of sensation or

feeling, called the feeling of pastness. This feeling of pastness is a characteristic of the believing itself and not part of the content of belief. The occurrence of this belief feeling, plus the image, plus a feeling that the object of the image was real, together constitute memory.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. Perhaps they do. I am not denying it. But this elaborate analysis seems to me terribly irrelevant to the subject at issue. When are we going to arrive at knowledge itself?

JOHN. Almost at once, I hope; although we must first consider belief, whose conformity with the theory has been hitherto assumed without analysis. Belief, after all, is a part of knowledge, so we are already approaching nearer the question at issue. Belief may be divided into three component parts. The act of believing, the content believed, and the objective of the belief. The objective of the belief is an external fact which may be in the past. It is the existence or non-existence of the objective fact which makes the belief true or false.

The act of believing and the content of the belief are mental occurrences. The act of belief is a feeling or sensation: it may be a feeling of mere assent, a feeling of pastness or a feeling of expectation. The content believed may be composed of words only (words are a form of sensation), of words and images, or of images and sensations. When, for instance, I believe that Napoleon retreated from Russia, the content of my belief is composed of images of Napoleon and of Russia suitably related by the word "retreated," which may or may not convey an image. This analysis of belief brings us at once to the question of knowledge. Knowledge may be defined as true belief. The constituents of belief I have already indicated: as regards the truth of a belief, I will be content for the moment with the provisional statement that the proposition which forms the content of a belief is true, when there exists an objective fact which corresponds with it.

It is now time to return once more to the difficulties you have raised regarding knowledge. It will be seen that they resolve themselves into two questions: Can any belief be and remain permanently true? Can we ever know of a

belief that it is true? These questions can be considered on two different hypotheses: first on your hypothesis, that fact is changeless and static: secondly on mine, that it is changing and fluid.

The Nature of Truth where Fact is Changeless.

1. (*a*) Let us in the first place assume the truth of your hypothesis.

The criterion of truth on this hypothesis is not difficult to define. If there exists an objective fact which corresponds with the content of the belief, then that belief is true.

Thus the belief that Nelson was shot in the chest is true, if there was at sometime or other an objective fact, namely, the shooting of Nelson in the chest. The case of false belief introduces a complication. We might believe that Nelson was shot in the chest, not only when he was in fact shot in the chest, but when he was shot in the leg. If he was in fact shot in the leg, then the belief that he was shot in the chest is false, and in this case it is clear that the relation of the belief to the fact is different from the relation that existed when we made the assumption that Nelson was shot in the chest.

This difference of relationship is expressed by Mr. Russell by saying that the belief that Nelson was shot in the chest points *towards the fact* if Nelson was shot in the chest, and away from the fact if Nelson was shot in the leg. Taking this for our formal definition of truth, we may ask whether it is ever possible for a belief to be absolutely true.

Let us consider three possible types of beliefs.

(i) Beliefs with regard to Objects of Perception.

Is a belief of the kind that asserts that the picture is to the right of the clock absolutely true?

Our beliefs, as we have seen, are composed of sensations and images suitably related. A belief of the kind in question may be composed entirely of images. We may have an image of the picture and an image of the clock and an image of the relationship between them, which is described by the statement that one is to the right of the other. Now this belief will only be true if the images do in some sense, how-

ever vague, represent or reproduce the objects which are their prototypes. But, unfortunately, we do not know the picture itself: we only know the appearance it presents to us when we experience certain sensations, which are called seeing the picture. To another person it will probably present an entirely different appearance. My image of the picture would not therefore correspond with the appearance which the picture presents to another person; yet this second appearance has as much right to claim to be the real appearance as the appearance presented to me. Whether there exists a real picture which is behind the system of appearances it presents, and which is the cause of their being presented, or whether, as seems more probable, the picture is simply the sum total of all the appearances presented by it, I am not prepared at the moment to say, as I shall return to the question later. At any rate, it is clear that, even if there is such a real picture, my image is not a copy of it, but only of one of its appearances. The same reasoning would apply to the clock, and to the image of the clock which is a constituent of the belief. It would appear, therefore, that the belief in question does not accurately correspond with the external fact which is its objective, and is accordingly not absolutely true.

(ii) Belief in Logical Propositions and Mathematical Truths.

I think my friend Anthony committed himself in an earlier discussion to the view that, if absolute truth existed, it was truth of an unimportant and trivial character. I think it possible that the truths of logical propositions, as, for example, the proposition that it is not possible for A to be at the same time greater and less than B, may be absolute; but I agree with Anthony that they are not important, or, as I should prefer to put it, not significant. By this I mean that the truths in question do not relate to objects in the external world, but are purely logical deductions resulting from and dependent upon definitions that we have ourselves invented. We define greater and less in a certain way, and then construct propositions which do no more than elaborate or paraphrase the meaning of our definition. There are, in short, no external

facts with which the various images involved in the belief I have just quoted can correspond.

(iii) Beliefs purporting to possess Artistic or Religious Truth.

These are, I think, Professor, the kind of beliefs you have chiefly had in mind when urging the changeless existence and validity of artistic truth, as opposed to Anthony's relativist theories. What I take you to mean is, is that certain works of art possess permanent value, and that our recognition of that value constitutes a form of permanent truth. Well, I am granting you for a moment the possibility of artistic value as a permanent or changeless fact. But the question arises in what sense is it possible to possess absolute knowledge of such a fact? Beliefs, you will remember, are composed of sensations and images. Now, I admit that we can have sensations and images of the form, the colouring, the perspective, the size, and so forth of Botticelli's Round Madonna; but in what sense can we have sensations and images of its artistic value? Artistic value is, as you yourself have said, an imponderable and incalculable thing. Even if we are to assume that it exists, it is, I think, generally admitted that we can never accurately gauge it; if we could, we should not all differ about it. As you have already said, artistic truth is not a kind of quantitative attribute of which each work of art possesses a definite amount either more or less. How then can we possess sensations and images which correspond accurately with the precise amount of value possessed by works of art? It is the same with religion. Even if we assume the existence of a personal God, it is not possible to possess accurate images and sensations of that which transcends the possibility of all sensation; so that, if true belief is composed of images and sensations, it would appear that it is not possible to possess true belief, or, if you prefer, knowledge, in matters of art and religion. This conclusion has the double merit of squaring with experience, which is to the effect that questions of art and religion are matters for the expression of feeling rather than for the exercise of judgment, and of answering a number of the difficulties that you put to Anthony when you charged him

with overlooking the existence in the world of a definite body of artistic and similar kinds of knowledge, which you asserted it to be the function of education to transmit.

You will observe that, according to my conclusion, he was right in disregarding such knowledge, since from the nature of things it cannot exist. And if we cannot *at any time* have true or certain knowledge in matters of art and literature, it follows that no knowledge of this kind can be permanently true. It would not be surprising therefore if judgments of artistic value, instead of having a degree of accuracy which is constant, should vary in precision at different times.

I think that was one of your conclusions, Anthony.

ANTHONY. Yes! I contended that the greatness of Shakespeare, for example, might diminish with the passage of time, which is another way of saying that the judgment that Shakespeare is the greatest playwright in the world, though possibly true once, may now possess a smaller degree of truth than it did, say, fifty years ago.

Is Truth the Same as Consistency?

JOHN. Let us now consider the second of the questions into which Professor Cameron's series of difficulties resolved itself, the question of whether we can ever know that a belief is true? And bear in mind that we are still considering these questions on the assumption that there is such a thing as static, changeless fact with which a belief may correspond.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. Excuse my interrupting you, but may I ask why it should be necessarily assumed that the meaning of truth is correspondence with external fact? You have hitherto made the assumption unquestioned; but now that you are proceeding to the question of the verifiability of beliefs, I must be allowed to suggest that the criterion of a true belief may consist in some intrinsic characteristic of the belief itself, and not in its capacity to correspond with an external fact. A true belief may mean a consistent belief, consistent, that is, not with external fact, but with all the rest of our beliefs, or, as I should prefer to put it, with the structure of our knowledge as a whole.

JOHN. Oh, you mean the coherence theory of truth! I confess I had not thought it necessary to go into that, as it

involves the assumption of the Hegelian metaphysic or something like it, into which, I am afraid, I had not thought it worth while to enter. The theory is one, is it not, which asserts that a true belief is a belief which is coherent not only with the general structure of the beliefs of the person holding the belief, but, since on this view there is no real distinction between one mind and another, with the sum total of all the beliefs in the Universe ?

PROFESSOR CAMERON. Yes ! Knowledge is a whole, and all the distinctions which appear to exist between my knowledge and yours are distinctions introduced by mind within knowledge itself, and spring directly from the partial and finite character of my intellect. On a larger view such distinctions would be shown to be unreal, error would cease to exist, and everything which is known would be seen to be coherent with everything else. Knowledge, in fact, is in the last resort a unified and perfect whole.

JOHN. That phrase, "in the last resort," means, I presume, when all distinctions are merged in the Absolute ?

PROFESSOR CAMERON. Yes.

JOHN. But it is only when the whole sum of possible beliefs is known, as, presumably, it can be known by the Absolute, that all beliefs become coherent. Some beliefs, false beliefs for example, may to a finite intelligence be non-coherent.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. Certainly, that is how one accounts for error, error being due to partial knowledge.

JOHN. Then since we do not know the whole of knowledge, it is always possible that a belief which appears to be coherent, may not really be coherent, and vice versa.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. Why so ?

JOHN. Because there may be certain beliefs in that part of knowledge which you do not know, with which the apparently coherent belief is non-coherent.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. Certainly.

JOHN. Then the coherence theory provides no test of the truth of any belief, since, short of the Absolute, no one can know whether a belief is coherent or whether it is not. That is to say, since coherence is on this view the meaning of truth, no one can ever know whether a belief is true or whether it is not. Also it may be observed incidentally that

since any belief, short of the Absolute, is partial, no such belief can be absolutely true, which is the result at which I have already arrived by a different chain of reasoning.

Can Beliefs be Verified ?

1. (*b*) Let me then return to the point which I reached before we began to talk about coherence, and consider whether we can ever know that a belief is true according to the criterion which I have assumed, namely, that of correspondence with fact.

I think there are three reasons why we cannot have this knowledge, or can have it only to a very limited extent. The first is a formal one, and applies in particular to general beliefs of a non-perceptual character. The second applies rather to judgments of perception, and depends upon the peculiar view of belief as composed of sensations and images which I have outlined. The third considers the test of verification suggested in the case of judgments of perception in relation to beliefs of a general character.

(i) It is clear, in the first place, that we can only know whether a belief is true by knowing the external fact with which the belief is to correspond : it is also clear that we must know this external fact independently of the belief itself, if we are to use our knowledge to test the truth of the belief.

Let us call the content of the belief that Cæsar crossed the Rubicon (A), and the external fact, namely Cæsar's crossing of the Rubicon (B). Now our knowledge that (A) is a true belief will involve another belief upon which its truth will depend ; this second belief is the belief that (A) corresponds with (B). This second belief we will call (C), and in order that we may know that belief (A) is true, it is necessary that belief (C) should also be true. It becomes necessary, therefore, to know that the belief (C), the belief namely, that belief (A) corresponds with external fact, corresponds itself with external fact, the fact, namely, that belief (A) corresponds with (B). We can only know this by means of a further belief (D), and thus we are landed in an infinite regress of beliefs before we can ever know that any belief is true.

Similarly with regard to so-called self-evident beliefs: many thinkers, as you know, regard self-evidence as a criterion of truth; yet how can you know that a belief is self-evident, except by means of a second self-evident belief that it is self-evident? The second self-evident belief will depend upon a third self-evident belief, and so on as before.

(ii) In the second place, let us consider the test by which we are to recognise a belief as true, in the case of judgments of perception. A belief, we decided, was composed of sensations and images. Now such a belief is shown to have been true by the subsequent occurrence of the kind of sensations which the belief, if true, would lead the holder of the belief to expect.

Thus, if I believe there is an egg for my breakfast, the content of my belief will be made up of a number of images, among which will be the image of the egg, of the egg-cup, and of the while tablecloth. These images will be accompanied by a certain feeling of expectation. If on descending to the breakfast room the egg is found to be on the table as expected, certain sensations will occur as a result of my seeing and touching the egg, which will be of a kind to satisfy the feeling of expectation accompanying the image content of my belief.

In this case we may say that the occurrence of the expected sensations verifies the belief, which is thereby proved to have been a true one.

Now verification in this sense can, I think, be said to be possible. But it is verification of an extremely limited kind. It is, in particular, subject to two important limitations which render it practically valueless as applied to the kind of beliefs whose certainty you are desirous of establishing.

In the first place, it is a type of verification which is only possible in the future. In the case of beliefs with regard to objects of perception the future is practically realisable. Thus the belief that the inside of my egg will become solid if I leave it in boiling water, is practically verifiable at the end of ten minutes when the egg is taken out of the water, and the expected sensations of solidity are found to attend the examination of its interior.

The Verifiability of Beliefs of a General Character.

(iii) In the case of beliefs of a general character, however, this future is indefinitely prolonged. Thus the image content of the belief that the sun rises in the east is incapable of verification, until we are acquainted with the sensations attendant upon all possible risings of the sun. Until we do become acquainted with each one of all the risings of the sun that can possibly occur, it will always remain possible that the sun may rise in the west.

One single instance of the sun's rising in the west would present us with sensations which would fail to verify our image belief that the sun rises in the east ; we must, therefore, be acquainted with all the instances of the sun's rising, before our belief can attain the certainty which arises from verification.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. But each fresh occasion on which the sun rises in the east tends to verify the belief, which becomes therefore progressively truer.

JOHN. Agreed : but we are concerned, are we not, not with beliefs which are more true or less true, but with the question of whether we can ever know of any belief that is absolutely true. You are, you will remember, contending for the possibility of knowledge which is certain, and I am denying that we can ever know that we have such knowledge. My present argument, then, is to the effect that beliefs of a general character can never be known to be completely true, because until we are acquainted with all possible instances of the belief, the general belief can never be completely verified. That is my first argument ; my second argument is this.

In the case of beliefs with regard to objects of perception, we saw that a certain kind of verification was afforded where the image content of the belief which was accompanied by a feeling of expectation, was, in fact, succeeded by the expected sensations. Let us consider this test as applied to the kind of beliefs whose certainty you are affirming in matters of science, of art, and of history. You urged, if I remember, that there existed a definite body of fixed and certain beliefs which constituted the inherited knowledge of mankind. This

knowledge was to be handed on to posterity by education. You also argued for the absolute truth of certain artistic and historical judgments. Let us take an unimpeachable instance of such knowledge; take the belief which asserts "Plato lived, and was a great philosopher." How can this belief be verified? The first part of the belief "Plato lived" raises a question of historical fact. The sensations which, according to our theory, might be expected to verify it, would be the sensations experienced on reading printed pages, which purported to be the pages of his works, on consulting works of reference and encyclopædias which asserted that Plato was born on such and such a date and lived at such and such a place, and on seeing busts of Plato in museums and similar places.

But on further examination it is found that the belief which these sensations do verify is a totally different belief. The verified belief is not the belief that Plato existed, but the belief that other people believe that he existed, and, because of this belief, write books about him and make busts that purport to reproduce him. In order that this belief, the belief, namely, that people believe that Plato existed, should yield the required evidence for the belief that Plato existed, it is necessary that it should be accompanied by another belief, to the effect that what people as a whole believe is true; and this other belief is a belief of that general kind which we have seen to be incapable of verification. I conclude, therefore, that we cannot know that the belief that Plato existed is true.

Now take the second part of the belief with which we started, the belief that Plato was a great philosopher. This belief is akin to the class of beliefs with regard to artistic value whose certainty you are most anxious to establish. Of what words and images the content of such beliefs consists, I find it difficult to say; but the expected sensations appropriate to such a content will be the highly complex sensations of profundity, comprehensiveness, insight, and logical power which are caused by the reading of Plato's works. But these sensations, when they occur, do not verify the greatness of Plato. What they do verify is your belief that you thought him great. Because of this belief you expected to

experience the sensations I have mentioned on reading him. The expected sensations occur, and accordingly verify the belief that they would occur. But these sensations afford no test to enable you to decide whether the belief is true or not. If Plato is in fact a great philosopher, the belief is true ; if not, the belief is false ; but the expected sensations do not enable you to determine the matter ; they only support and verify the belief you already entertained with regard to it. I conclude, therefore, that we cannot know that judgments of artistic value, of literary and philosophic greatness, and other judgments of a similar kind are true : we can only confirm ourselves in the possession of them. This confirmation may be a reinforcement of our prejudices, or it may constitute knowledge which approximates to truth ; whether it reinforces our prejudices or gives us true knowledge will depend upon whether the original belief which it supports was true or false, a question which must be decided, if it can be decided, independently of such confirmation.

This conclusion is of importance, in so far as it lends countenance to the provisional and relative character which my friend Anthony attributed to judgments of literary and artistic value. If it does not actually imply that one opinion is as good as another, it suggests that there is no means of telling which of two conflicting opinions is the better ; it also robs such opinions of the authoritativeness and certainty which you were anxious to claim for them.

Up to the present I have only considered the question of knowledge from the point of view of the knower, and I have assumed that such a thing as changeless fact existed to be known. We have now to look at the matter from the point of view of the object of knowledge, and consider whether this assumption can be admitted. Our conclusions on this point will be strictly relevant to the main theme of our discussion, since, besides rendering us assistance in our consideration of the possibility of absolute knowledge, they will throw light upon such questions as whether the works of Shakespeare possess permanent and unchanging value, which you have frequently put during the course of our discussions.

II. The Analysis of Matter.

Can we make the assumption that fact is changeless, and if we cannot make it, what conclusions are to be drawn as to the possibility of knowledge and truth?

You will remember that when speaking of Mr. Russell's endeavour to effect a *rapprochement* between different branches of knowledge, I foreshadowed a treatment of this question as a question of physics and not of metaphysics. I did not mean by this hint that I intended to analyse the constituents of the atom. What I did mean was that our enquiry into the nature of matter would be pursued by the same "psychological" methods, if I may be forgiven this use of the word, as those which have been followed in our brief analysis of knowledge.

What is it exactly that an analysis of our experience of matter tells us of the so-called object of experience?

Common-sense takes it for granted, and you have, Professor, in several of your arguments assumed that there is a world of solid objects extended in space, which is presented to the mind in knowledge, that this world is the object of our knowledge, and that it is at the same time other than the mind which knows it. It is this assumption that I want very briefly to question.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. Excuse me, but I should be the last to make such an assumption. As I hinted in my remarks on truth, I believe there is no such thing as external reality in the sense of a reality which is other than mind. I would also prefer not to use the word external, since for me, all distinctions of the kind implied by the words internal and external are partial and unreal. In the last resort there is no distinction between mind and its object.

JOHN. I am so sorry; I forgot. But in excuse for my erroneous supposition that you believed in external fact, you must allow me to plead the countenance given to my error by the kind of difficulty you put to Anthony. You see, if one were to take your Hegelian theory seriously, there would be no definite and distinctive value in the works of Shakespeare, just as there would be no works of Shakespeare, to have value, and no minds to wrangle about its quality

and permanence. All these conceptions depend on the recognition of a distinction both between Shakespeare and his works, and between Shakespeare's works and the minds of their appreciative or disparaging critics. Your very eloquent development of Plato's Theory of Ideas, which both Anthony and I have taken seriously enough to endeavour to combat, also presupposes the distinctions you are now denying. I propose, therefore, to concentrate my attention upon what I take to be the common-sense view of the world as external fact presented to mind, and to comfort myself by the reflection that you have frequently maintained the existence and changelessness of such external fact, at any rate for practical purposes, in discussion with Anthony.

Professor Cameron. For practical purposes, yes. You cannot conduct your life on Hegelian premises.

John. I agree. To return, then, to the point at which we digressed, I want to question the changeless fact assumption from a point of view suggested not by Hegel but by Mr. Russell. This point of view amounts to an importation into the world of metaphysics of the methods of psychology, with the resultant reduction of metaphysics to physics. As I think I have already mentioned, the "psychologising" of various branches of philosophical enquiry is the chief characteristic of the tendencies in modern thought to which I referred earlier in our discussion. I cannot hope to give all Mr. Russell's arguments in the brief time left to us, or even to do justice to those which I do give. I will, however, select two which are particularly relevant to our main theme.

The So-called Law of Cause and Effect.

(*a*) The first relates to the so-called unalterable laws of physics. A world of solid objects, even if they be reduced to solid atoms or electrons or whatever other entity happens to be fashionable at the moment, presupposes certain unalterable laws according to which such objects behave. One such law was Newton's law of gravitation; but Einstein has, I understand, already shown that to be in certain respects inadequate, so we will take an even more universally accepted law, the law of cause and effect.

This law is a delight to the mechanists; it lies at the very foundation of physics. Let us see to what Mr. Russell's analysis reduces it.

Modern physics have shown that so-called events or changes are really processes. If, then one event is to cause another, the two events must be contiguous in time, since, if there were any interval between them, another event might intervene to prevent the expected effect. Furthermore, it cannot be the whole of the causal process which has the effect of causing the caused process, since, so long as the later part of the causal process remains unchanged, the earlier part is irrelevant. It is only the later part of the causal process, therefore, that is effective. Similarly, it is not the whole of the caused process which we need consider to be affected; the later part of the caused process is irrelevant, provided the earlier part of the caused process manifests the appropriate changes. Thus, if I get my feet wet and consequently catch a cold, it is not the actual wetting of the feet which causes the cold, since I might be subsequently drenched to the skin before getting home, in which case the drenching of my clothes, coupled with a presumed inability to change them, would be the cause of the cold. What happens is that the wetting of the feet produces certain physiological changes in myself; assuming that these changes operate uninterruptedly they will nevertheless occupy a certain time before the resultant cold occurs. The earlier part of these changes may be again eliminated so that the process which is called the cause comes to be continually shortened. Similarly with the effect. Immediately after catching the cold, I may succumb to a typhoid infection which will have the effect of intensifying or at least of profoundly modifying the cold. It is, moreover, impossible to say what kind of cold it will be or how it will affect the system, merely through knowing that it was caused by wet feet. These later developments can therefore be ruled out of our consideration of "the effect." Thus it is only the latest part of the cause process and the earliest part of the effect process which can be regarded as causally related. Proceeding in this way we can indefinitely shorten both the cause process and the effect process, until we arrive at a limit at which the notion of two

causally related events gives way to the notion of one continuous process.

Instead, therefore, of a uniform law of cause and effect applicable to objects whose movements are governed by the operations of the law, we have in the world of physics to deal with processes which are undergoing continual change, and with laws which tell us what is the rate and direction of the change at a given moment. But we have now to take a further step, and to show that these processes with which physics deals are the same as the processes which, under the name of mental events, are the subject-matter of psychology. If this step can be taken, the result will be to abolish the conception of an external world of changeless fact, and to substitute instead a world of neutral and continually changing events, which, under different forms of arrangement, are the subject-matter of physics and psychology respectively. At the same time we shall be able to answer the question with which we started this part of our enquiry, namely, the question of whether it is possible to have absolute and certain knowledge, assuming that there is no such thing as changeless fact to know.

Neutral Particulars as the Subject-matter of Physics and Psychology.

(*b*) The argument which I propose to follow is the second of the arguments which we are borrowing from Mr. Russell, and affords a good example of the bridge-building between the different departments of knowledge so characteristic of modern tendencies of thought.

You will remember that at an earlier stage of my remarks, I expressed a doubt as to whether there existed a real picture on the wall in addition to the sum of the various appearances of the picture presented to various observers. Now the Idealist theories, which I understand you uphold, have made it clear that if such a real picture exists we can never know it as it is. What we do know are the appearances of the so-called picture which are presented to ourselves, or if you like, which are imprinted on the retina of the eye, and these appearances are only selections from the whole content of the picture observed.

These selections are governed by the special interests or circumstances of the observer, so that the artist will see a different appearance from the framemaker, and the colour-blind person from the man with normal sight.

Now it has been generally assumed that there must be an underlying cause for these various appearances. The familiar formula for perception on the old Representationalist view, which may be taken as typical, was, in fact, something after this fashion : if A is the knowing mind and C the external object, what is known by A is not C but B, B being the impression made upon A, via the optical nerves and so forth, by C. This, you will remember, was Locke's formula for the process of perception. Berkeley pointed out that if you never knew C, you could not know that C existed, much less that it was the cause of B. Berkeley, then, was left with only A and B. The modern Idealists went one step further. As all distinctions are unreal, the distinction between the subject and object of knowledge cannot be maintained, knowledge being a synthesis, which is only split up into mind and object with the knowledge relation subsisting between them, as a result of later analysis : the distinction, it is urged, is not given ready-made in experience. For the Idealist, then, B is merged in A, and A alone, or if you like, A qualified by a B, which is only disentangled from A by later reflection, is left. The new Realists, on the other hand, cut out B and asserted that it was the function of mind to know the object direct without the intervention of any intermediate ideas or appearances. For the new Realist, then, there exist A and C.

Now we have already seen that Mr. Russell looks coldly on consciousness. He adopts a Behaviourist attitude towards it, tending to throw suspicion upon its existence or at any rate upon its importance, since it cannot be observed. He is aware of thoughts, but not of a thinker of those thoughts, and in reducing thought to images and sensations and the relations between them, he has rendered the existence of a continuous I, a bare subject, which has or experiences the various images and sensations superfluous. We are faced, then, from the beginning with the elimination of A. The next stage of the argument consists in the suppression of C, and we are left with B alone, B being composed of neutral

particulars or events, which in one context are called mind and in another matter.

How is this last stage effected?

Mr. Russell considers the case of a star which is being photographed by an ordinary camera. The star so photographed produces an effect upon the photographic plate which is called the photograph of the star. Assuming, as science usually does assume, the continuity of physical processes, we must conclude that not only at the place where the plate is, but at every place between it and the star something is happening which is specially connected with the star. Whenever, then, a plate is exposed to a star, something connected with the star will be happening at the place where the plate is; and, since the photographic plate is only introduced as an example, because owing to its sensitiveness to light rays we can observe the happenings, we are forced to the conclusion that at any given moment, (1) an enormous number of happenings which are specially connected with the star are occurring at different places, and (2) since many other objects besides the star present appearances to the plate, an enormous number of happenings are occurring at the place where the plate is; that is to say, an enormous number of happenings are occurring at each one of the places referred to in (1), namely, a separate series of happenings for each physical object which can be photographed from that place. Now, these two different classes of happenings are really two different arrangements of the same class of happening. The first arrangement is one which collects together all the happenings occurring, or appearances presented at one place at a given time; the other collects together all the happenings occurring or appearances presented at different places at the same time, these appearances being those which, owing to their similarity and to certain laws of perspective with which I need not trouble you here, commonsense regards as being the appearances of the same object.

The first class of appearances represents the view of the world from one place; this view of the world Mr. Russell calls a perspective. The second, which consists of all the similar and related appearances presented at different places, constitutes a piece of matter.

One further point, and I shall be in a position to deal with some of the specific questions with which we started. Returning for a moment to the case of the star, it is obvious that, before the light of the star reaches the photographic plate, it passes through an intervening medium. Whether this medium is ether or some other entity or merely empty space need not trouble us here. The effect of the passage through the medium is, however, to distort the appearance of the star, according to certain definite laws which will vary according to the nature of the substance through which the light passes.

In one class of case, namely, that class in which the place at which the various appearances are presented is a human brain, the intervening medium is partly composed of the human eye and the optical nerves. What is called the sensation of seeing the star may therefore be defined as one of the system of appearances which is the star, namely, that one which is presented at a place at which there is a brain with sense organs and nerves as the intervening medium. The sensation of seeing the star is, therefore, one of that set of appearances which, when taken together at all the places at which they are appearances, constitutes the star. We have, therefore, arrived at a formula for stating mind and matter, the subject-matter of psychology and physics respectively, in the same terms.

Treating all sensations in the same way as the sensation of seeing the star, we may say that the core of a mind at any given moment—and by the core of a mind I mean sensations which, together with the images which they cause, have been shown to be the stuff of which mind is made—consists of a system of particulars or appearances occurring at a place such that all appearances reaching that place have passed through the intervening medium of sense organs and nerves.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. How, then, do you distinguish one so-called mind from another?

JOHN. Partly by time relations. I admit that the sensation of seeing the star may, as I have defined it up to the present, occur in precisely the same way in two places at what is apparently the same time. But two sensations of

the same thing, which, as we have been accustomed to say, are known by mind, are not identical particulars, nor are the perspectives in which they occur identical perspectives.

Take the second point first. You will remember that we spoke of a perspective, or the view of the world from a given place, as all the appearances of different objects presented at that place, or as all the particulars happening at a given moment at that place. Now, if you take any one of these particulars, which, in a case in which the place is a human brain and the intervening medium is composed of sense organs, has been defined as a sensation, this sensation is related to all the other particulars which form part of the same mind at the same time by the relation of simultaneity. Now this relation of simultaneity does not hold between the sensation in question and the sensation made by the same physical object upon another mind at what is called the same time, since there is no universal time such that all minds participate in it, but only local times, each one of which is confined to one mental biography. Hence the only events which can be simultaneous with a given event are events in that biography. Hence you can group together the sensations occurring in one perspective by the relation of simultaneity, and so distinguish the view taken by a mind of the world at a given moment from the view taken by another mind at the same moment. This argument, of course, depends upon developments in modern physics which are largely bound up with the theory of Relativity. I am assuming the validity of these developments.

But not only are sensations occurring in different perspectives distinguished from each other by the absence of the relation of simultaneity, but they are, or at any rate, they immediately become, different sensations. I spoke just now of the core of mind being constituted of the set of appearances or particulars occurring at a certain kind of place, because I was anxious to establish the homogeneous character of the particulars constituting the physical object and the sensation of the physical object ; but it is in a very real sense only the core of mind which is so constituted. The appearances of objects occurring in a place at which a brain and sense organs form the intervening medium become specially char-

acterised in two ways: they give rise to mnemic phenomena, and they are themselves affected by mnemic phenomena.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. What are mnemic phenomena, pray?

JOHN. The term mnemic phenomena, a name suggested by the German psychologist Semon, is the term applied to those responses of an organism which cannot be explained by taking into account only the present stimulus to the organism, but which demand that the past history of the organism shall be included among the causal factors conditioning the response. Thus if I have been to New York and you have not, the images called up in our minds by the stimulus of the words "New York" will be very different in character. Since the present stimulus is the same, the difference in the images evoked can only be explained by taking into account the difference between your past history and mine. These images, then, would be instances of mnemic phenomena.

It is, I think, not too much to say that every mental occurrence of whatever kind is influenced by past history. It is affected by memory, by association, by mental habits, inherited beliefs and so forth; it is natural, therefore, to suppose that this influence extends to the occurrence of those particulars which we have defined as sensations.

Theoretically these sensations are as I have endeavoured to define them. Practically, however, we never experience a bare sensation. In practice a sensation is only the core of what we do actually experience: it is that part of the experience which results from the present stimulus. The rest of the experience is due to the operations of memory, association, mental habits, trends of desire and all the other mental factors with which psychologists have made us familiar. And the particular which is a sensation is not only influenced by these factors, but it plays its part in causing and conditioning the operation of these same factors in relation to future sensations.

After it has been subjected to these influences the sensation becomes a perception, and although, as I have said, mind in the last analysis is made up of sensations and the images which sensations cause, what we experience in practice are perceptions.

I have been discussing here the nature of the events which occur when appearances are presented at a place where there is a brain with sense organs and nerves for the intervening medium. These events are mental events. But it is important to bear in mind that such occurrences are only a special class of the occurrences or particulars, which constitute any piece of matter. Psychology from this point of view is simply a branch of physics, the so-called psychological events which occur at a place where there is a brain, and which are accordingly called sensations, being only distinguished in their general character from events occurring at other places by the fact of their being affected by and giving rise to mnemic phenomena.

To sum up the method of regarding the Universe which I have been trying briefly to sketch, we may say that the Universe is composed of neutral particulars. Every such particular is associated with two places. Thus, reverting to our instance of the star and the photographic plate, the particular which is happening at the plate which is the appearance of the star presented to the plate is associated both with the place, where the star is, and with the place where the plate is. Taken in association with all the appearances which the star presents at all other places, it belongs to the system of appearances which constitute the momentary star; taken in association with all the other appearances presented at the same time, at the place where the plate is, it belongs to the system which constitutes the momentary plate. The case of the brain is only a special instance of the case of the plate: in this special instance the appearance presented is called a sensation, and the sum total of all the appearances presented at the same time at a place where a brain is constitutes a mental perspective.

Each star is a series of such momentary stars, the system of appearances which constitutes each momentary star being related to the other systems which constitute the life history of what is called the same star, by the relation of similarity and by the fact of belonging to the same time series. Similarly the series of momentary plates constitutes a plate, and the series of momentary perspectives constitutes a mind.

This, I think, must serve as a summary of the general

position. I propose, however, to cite one more instance of Mr. Russell's in illustration of its special significance for psychology, and will then proceed to draw deductions with reference to the questions with which we started. An actor is appearing on the stage before an audience. He presents different appearances and aspects to each member of the audience. Form the series of all such appearances into sets, and the sum total of the sets is what the actor is doing at a given moment: if you could extend these sets of series to embrace all the appearances presented by the actor at all possible places (that is to say, not only at those places at which the brains of the various members of the audience are situated), you would have a complete description of the actor from the point of view which regards him as a piece of matter.

Now collect together the series of appearances which he presents successively to the same spectator, and proceed similarly with each other spectator in the house; the result will be a set of series instead of a series of sets, and it will tell you not what the actor does but the impressions he produces. The significant point is that, although we are dealing with the same particulars as those which gave us our description of the actor as a piece of matter, the mere process of arranging them differently has transformed our subject-matter into the mental biographies of the spectators. Hence the same particulars which, arranged in one context constitute a piece of matter, will, when arranged in another, constitute the impression produced by that piece of matter on a mind. Hence we have defined mind and matter in the same terms, namely, in terms of neutral particulars or occurrences.

We are now in a position to deal with the questions which provoked all this exposition.

Subjectivity in the World of Matter.

With regard to the character of matter it will be readily seen that, if the analysis of objects into successive systems of momentary particulars is correct, no world of solid, changeless matter exists. Each particular has only a momentary existence, and is related to the remaining members of the

system of particulars, which, taken together, constitute an object by certain time relations and relations of similarity. Similarity is a conception capable of a considerable degree of vagueness, so that the limits of any particular system of particulars will tend to be variable, instead of being well defined and constant like the boundaries of a solid object.

Furthermore, matter itself is tainted with subjectivity. By this I mean that the so-called subjectivity attendant upon the knowledge of matter by mind is not confined to mind: it infects equally the relations between matter and matter.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. I am not sure that I understand you here. Can you explain?

JOHN. The conclusion follows directly from the preceding exposition. We saw that matter could not be defined in isolation, but only by reference to the appearances it presented at various places. Now these appearances can never be interpreted solely in terms of the matter of which they are appearances: they are always infected, as it were, by the nature of that to which they are appearances; that is to say, they are always irregular appearances of the piece of matter.

Mr. Russell compares the appearances of a piece of matter, the star for example, to the conjugations of a Greek verb. The star being situated in empty space, may be defined for the purposes of physics as consisting of all those appearances which it presents in vacuo, together with all the other appearances which, according to the laws of perspective, it would present elsewhere if its appearances elsewhere were regular.

But, strictly speaking, its appearances in vacuo are not appearances, and none of its appearances elsewhere are regular. In the first place irregularity arises from the fact that, when the light of the star reaches our atmosphere, it is dimmed and refracted; that is to say, the appearance of the star becomes an irregular appearance because of the distorting effect of the medium. Presently the light of the star reaches the place at which the appearance is, as we say, presented. Here a complicated process takes place. If the "place" in question is a human eye with a brain behind it, there occurs a sensation which is immediately subject to mnemic phenomena. This sensation is called seeing the star. It is clear

with regard to this sensation, that it is not a regular appearance of the star, that is to say, it is not an appearance whose causation lies entirely within the system of appearances which is the star, but a complex phenomenon considerably affected by the biography of the person observing the star. This is only one way of putting the old point that we do not know the star as it is, but only know an appearance of it: our knowledge is, in fact, subjective.

But it is not only when the light of the star reaches a place where there is a living creature's eye that this irregularity in the appearing takes place, although this may be the only case in which the irregular appearance is observed. The distorting medium of the atmosphere is, of course, present in any event; but there is no reason to suppose that this is the only source of irregularity when the star is presented, say, to the photographic plate. What does happen when the light of the star reaches the plate it is impossible to say, but it is, I think, clear that the event in question is one whose causation lies no more wholly within the system of appearances which is the star, than it did when the appearance was thought of as being presented to a mind. The event, which is the appearance of the star at the place where the plate is, is, in fact, as much affected by the characteristics of the plate as of the star. Thus every event or particular in the material world is an irregular appearance of the object of which it is an appearance; and the irregularity is due not only to the effect of the intervening medium, but also to the fact that the object at the place at which the appearance is presented is causally related to the appearance equally with the object of which it is an appearance. A perspective is, as we have said, a view of the world from a given place; it follows from this last consideration, that it is not only when that place is occupied by a mind that the view of the world from it is partial and subjective.

Thus the relations between so-called objects are infected with the subjectivity which arises from the necessity of taking the nature of each of the related objects into account; and this subjectivity is not confined to the one case in which one of the objects is a knowing mind. The system of particulars, which is a piece of matter, is, in fact, affected by the nature

of the systems which constitute the other pieces of matter to which it is related; so that, instead of dealing with a world of matter composed of solid objects extended in space, the physicist does in fact record changes in the relations between constantly changing systems of particulars.

In applying our conclusions to the question you raised as to the nature of matter, we have incidentally provided the answer to that other important question from which we set out. We contracted, if you remember, to find an answer to the question of whether absolute knowledge is possible; and having considered that question on the assumption of the truth of the hypothesis that there was a changeless world of external fact to know, we have now to ask whether my hypothesis of a world composed of constantly changing systems of particulars affects our answer. It is, I think, sufficiently obvious that it does not.

Our Knowledge of the World studied by Physics.

You will remember our previous conclusion that, with unimportant exceptions, it was not possible to entertain beliefs that were completely true, however we defined the meaning of truth, and that it was equally impossible to assert of any belief that it was true. Let us return to our definition of the meaning of truth as correspondence with external fact, a definition which seemed to be more in accord with the dictates of common-sense and less open to criticism than any of the others. It is necessary, then, in order that a belief may be true, for the related images and sensations which compose it to correspond with the objective of the belief. Translating this statement into the phraseology we have been using when speaking of matter, we may say that it is necessary, in order that a belief may be true, for it to be composed of sensations and images which are copies of the sensations which would constitute regular appearances of a piece of matter, if such regular appearances could be experienced. But we have already seen that no sensation can be a regular appearance, all appearances presented at a given place being affected not only by the intervening medium but by the character of the object, in this case the brain of the person entertaining the belief, occupying that place. It follows, then,

that the greatest degree of accuracy of which a belief is capable, is that constituted by correspondence between the content of the belief and a sensation, which is an irregular appearance of a piece of matter; and that we can never have a belief which corresponds with a regular appearance of a piece of matter. Hence I conclude that we can never possess an absolutely true belief with regard to the external world, and also, since we could only convict any given correspondence as a correspondence with an irregular appearance by knowing the regular appearance to begin with, I conclude that we can never know of any belief that it is true, or, except on the general ground of necessary irregularity I have just suggested, that it is untrue.

That, I think, completes my answer to the specific questions you have raised. I am sorry, Mr. Banks, that it has been so complicated and technical.

MR. BANKS. I am afraid I have not been able to follow very much of it. It does not seem to me to have very much to do with the philosophy I am used to. What are these particulars I should like to know? I have never seen one that I am aware of, and yet, so far as I could gather, this new method of which we have heard, prides itself considerably on its refusal to go beyond what is actually given in experience. Is a particular actually given in experience?

JOHN. No! It is arrived at by a logical analysis of what is given; or rather, since we never know what is actually given because it immediately becomes subject to mnemic phenomena, by analysis the perception which forms the content of our expression. As I pointed out a moment ago, we never experience a pure sensation: what we experience is the perception, i.e. the sensation as affected by mnemic phenomena; but the sensation can be shown to be the core of perception by logical analysis: and the sensation is a particular.

It is only theoretically, then, that the content of what is actually given is a series of momentary particulars or appearances: practically it is not of them that we are aware.

MR. BANKS. Well, frankly, I don't understand it. What do you make of it, Professor?

PROFESSOR CAMERON. Personally I have no quarrel to

make with the exposition, and I am not sure that I should disagree very violently with the theories expounded. I daresay they are admirable as psychology, but they do not seem to me to touch the real problems of philosophy, as I have understood them.

JOHN. It is because the real problems of philosophy, as you have understood them, are insoluble by the traditional methods of philosophy, that some of us have had recourse to the methods of psychology, and have applied those methods to the Universe as known to physics. The methods of traditional logic have proved barren except in the world of logic, a world that has no real existence.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. That may be so. I don't think it is so, but I say it may be so because I don't want to go into that now. What I was about to say was, that whatever we may think of the application of the Behaviourist psychology and of the conclusions of the physicists to philosophy in general, it seems to me singularly unfortunate that you should have introduced them into yours.

JOHN. Why so ?

PROFESSOR CAMERON. Because your zeal for these new methods, and your anxiety to be in line with modern tendencies, appear to have led you into a grave inconsistency.

JOHN. How ?

In what Sense is there Duality of Mind and Matter ?

PROFESSOR CAMERON. I have now had an opportunity of obtaining from Mr. Banks a full account of the theories you expounded during the course of his first two discussions with you, of which he took copious notes. I understand that in those discussions you took your stand on a certain fundamental position, and that you took special pains to emphasize this position by contrasting it with the different positions taken up by others. This fundamental postulate of yours was the duality of mind and matter ; and, if you remember, you fell foul both of M. Bergson and of M. Geley for their failure to recognise this duality.

How, you asked, could the *élan vital* account both for consciousness and for matter, for action and for action unmaking itself, unless there was a fundamental distinction in

the *élan vital* itself? And if such a fundamental distinction were assumed, how could reality be the homogeneous, indivisible flow which Bergson conceived?

Again you asked in criticism of M. Geley, How could the all-pervading dynamo-psychism be the innermost essence of brute matter? Could it be said of matter, "of all that sea for example," that it was evolving from unconsciousness into consciousness? Was not the unconscious of the Self implanted in the Self by the dynamo-psychism, of quite a different type from the unconsciousness of matter? And finally you called upon both Bergson and Geley to explain how difference, or even the delusive appearance of difference, could be generated from absolute oneness and homogeneity? Having suggested that these difficulties were insoluble, you proceeded to infer a duality in the Universe, a duality of mind and matter, and then went on to postulate a Life Force which had created the human mind as a weapon in its struggle to overcome matter.

So far as I followed Mr. Banks' account, you considered each of these three entities, the Life Force, mind and matter, to be unanalysable in the sense that no one of them could be resolved into either of the other two.

JOHN. Yes, these are three now, but as the Life Force created mind, it is probable that mind could again be resolved into that which created it. If and when the Life Force accomplishes its purpose, which we will assume to be the imposition of life and consciousness upon the whole Universe of dead matter, I can conceive that it will have no further use for mind, in the sense of the individualised minds of human beings, and mind may accordingly be merged again in the all-pervading Life Force.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. That of course is a possibility, though I do not feel sure that you have sufficiently examined all its implications: the idea savours too much of the Absolute to accord harmoniously with the rest of your system. However, that is not the main point: the main point is that as you expounded the theory of the Life Force, it provided for mind and matter as two real and fundamental entities, neither of which could be resolved into the other. Very good! You then approach the subject from an entirely

different angle, and, in order to meet certain difficulties touching the possibility of absolute knowledge which I put to Mr. Anthony, you expound, with every appearance of agreement, a metaphysic whose cardinal feature is the assertion of one fundamental, homogeneous "stuff" of which the Universe is composed. This homogeneous stuff turns out to be "systems of neutral particulars," which, when arranged in one context form the substance of mind, and in another the substance of matter.

Now, without expressing any opinion as to the soundness of this latter conception, I want to ask how you reconcile it with the former. How can a fundamental duality of mind and matter be reconciled with a fundamental homogeneous stuff? And what has become of the Life Force, anyhow?

JOHN. I must thank you for putting the difficulty so clearly for me. I was thinking of dealing with the point in any event, but you have made me see that, as I have put the case in to-day's discussion, it does seem to involve a contradiction with my earlier presentation of it. This contradiction is, however, only superficial, as I shall try to show.

You will remember, Mr. Banks, that I spoke of the Life Force as a principle of energy and vitality, appearing, as it were, in a world of chaos and deadness and blankness, whose existence was in some way or other anterior to the existence of the Force. I assumed this Force to have a purpose, which I conceived to be the conquest of matter, so that universal life and consciousness might take the place of universal deadness and materiality. To accomplish this purpose the Life Force created human beings and breathed into them a vital spirit, which subsequently took shape as the human mind, the human conscious and the human unconscious. In order, however, to obtain the substance or material of which to make these creatures, the Life Force was compelled to use the stuff of which it found the Universe to be composed, and this stuff, which was the only available stuff in the Universe, we called matter.

Now I have tried to-day to suggest an analysis of matter, which shows it to be composed of series of particulars arranged in certain contexts. I want you to think of these series of particulars as the homogeneous stuff which forms the sub-

stance of the Universe, the stuff with which the Life Force has to work when endeavouring to forge the weapons which it intends to use for the fulfilment of its purpose. Our question is, then, in what way does the Life Force make use of these series of particulars in order to form the weapon which is human mind? Now, it is clear that the Life Force cannot create a new substance, for the particulars or events, as we have conceived them, are the only substance in the Universe, and, as nothing can be created out of nothing, whatever was created would have to be formed out of the particulars; nor can it transform the particulars into some substance which is other than themselves: such a transformation would either be tantamount to a new creation, or, if it were not, would involve the necessity of the newly formed substance being infected by the nature of that out of which it was transformed.

The Life Force, therefore, can neither create new particulars, nor can it transform the existing particulars. What it can do is to arrange the particulars in special contexts and series.

At this point I want to have recourse to a metaphor in order to explain the kind of process which my conception involves. If you take a collection of steel shavings and subject them to the influence of a magnet, they will immediately stand to attention, as it were, and arrange themselves in certain very definite patterns. Now mind, as I conceive it, is just such an arrangement of particulars, which have been magnetised, as it were, by the operations of the Life Force.

The Life Force is like an electric current running down the wire of a battery. Certain substances, such as wood or the silk on lightning conductors, refuse to take the current; what is wanted, therefore, is an arrangement of particulars of such a kind that it will take the current of energy proceeding from the Force. Given such an arrangement, we may call it mind; and it is by means of this arrangement that the Life Force contrives, while utilising the material out of which the Universe is composed, to create out of that material weapons which may be used and stimulated into its service.

There are three important points about this explanation to which I should like to draw attention. The first consists

of its recognition of the fact that mind is not a new and unique substance in the Universe, but simply a certain arrangement of the one homogeneous substance. This arrangement is, however, a fundamental fact, as fundamental almost as the Life Force itself, since we may suppose that, from the moment of its appearance in the Universe, the Life Force began to impose its form of arrangement upon matter.

In the second place this conception does not involve the creation of matter by the Life Force. The Life Force is outside matter, and does not create matter. Matter may be defined as all those arrangements of the particulars which are other than the arrangement which constitutes mind. The Life Force then finds matter ready made and uses it for its purposes.

The merit of this hypothesis lies in its avoidance of the difficulties, which were found to attend the endeavour made both by Bergson and Geley, to saddle their creative force with the responsibility for matter. If the creative force creates everything and controls everything, it cannot escape the responsibility for pain and evil. It is the necessity for accounting for the existence of these facts, and the impracticability of the attempt to explain them away as partially seen aspects of something else, which has led to the abandonment by most thinking men of the omnipotent god theory. We may add that, if the creative force is to an equal degree the source and origin of everything, the question of motive is insoluble. Why was this tremendous process of evolution ever set on foot? That perfection might, via pain, evil and imperfection, evolve back again into perfection?

These questions are not to be answered, and in the interests of an economy of mystery, it is better not to assume a hypothesis which provokes them. By placing the Life Force outside matter we are able to conceive of it as limited and imperfect, hampered in its operations by the recalcitrant nature of the material with which it has to work, and experimenting with the character of its instruments, in order to determine into what shape that material may most effectively be moulded.

Thirdly, it is important to note that the mere process of arranging of matter into certain collections of particulars,

which will, so to speak, take the current, constitutes in itself the creation of mind; it is not therefore necessary to suppose that the minds of which we are aware, and which we call ours, are themselves part of the Life Force, in the sense of being an expression of the Life Force's mind.

I have already shown, in criticising M. Geley, with what difficulties this latter conception is attended. It requires us to suppose that every act, every thought, every desire, every expression of will and purpose on our part is, to an equal degree, an emanation from the Life Force itself. But if we can only will with the will of the Force, how can we ever will contrary to its purpose? That we do so will, the fact of inconsistency between our own desires and of opposition between our own and our neighbour's is sufficient evidence. Hence it seems necessary to assume that our will and our consciousness are not themselves part of the consciousness of the Life Force, if indeed it is conscious, but are in themselves something other than the Life Force, though created by it and subject to its influence.

We are to conceive then that, having once effected such a grouping of particulars as constitutes mind, the Life Force, though able to influence and stimulate it through the unconscious in the manner I have already endeavoured to describe, is not in a position of absolute command over its activities, such that it can always dictate their direction. And it is to this circumstance, that the Life Force has to work in and through matter, that we may, as I have already suggested, attribute the phenomenon of Free Will.

I hope what I have just said will indicate, however sketchily, the way in which my contention that the Universe is composed of one homogeneous stuff, may be reconciled with my insistence on the duality of mind and matter. There is homogeneity in the sense that mind and matter are both composed of the same stuff; thus psychology deals with a special arrangement of the subject-matter of physics. There is duality in the sense that the difference in arrangement is vital and fundamental. Because of this difference mind is subject to the Life Force, while matter is opposed to it, while all arrangements of particulars, except that one arrangement which constitutes a brain with sense organs as the inter-

vening medium, remain outside the influence and operations of the Force.

I hope that what I have said is satisfactory, at any rate as a reconciliation of apparent inconsistency.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. You postulate a homogeneity of substance and a duality of arrangement.

JOHN. Yes!

PROFESSOR CAMERON. And your Life Force is responsible for the special arrangement of the substance, which is mind.

JOHN. Yes!

PROFESSOR CAMERON. So that, even if all matter and all mind were to be abolished, the Life Force would still persist.

JOHN. That is so.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. And does that complete your doctrine?

The Phenomenon of Desire.

JOHN. Practically it does! But I would like to add, if I might, a few words on the special relationship between the kind of psychology I have been describing—the sensation and image psychology—and the Life Force hypothesis. I think that this psychology does afford new and important evidence of a general character for my thesis. Have you the time?

PROFESSOR CAMERON. I think so. Will it take long?

JOHN. No, I have nearly finished. What I have to say in these concluding words relates mainly to the phenomenon of desire. I want very briefly to consider the account of desire which would, I think, be given by the Behaviourist psychology, and to emphasise its significance for the general view I have been advocating.

Let me first of all state what I take to be the normal view of the psychology of desire. A desire is usually regarded as an attitude on the part of the subject towards something which appears in his consciousness. The individual imagines something, he is aware of the imagining, and he experiences a certain feeling towards what he imagines; the something imagined is called the object of the desire; the feeling towards

it is called the desiring. The so-called object of the desire, which is also termed the " content of the desire," may equally well form the content of a belief or of a fear without undergoing any change. Thus in the expression, " I desire to have a fortune," the having of the fortune, which is the content of the desire, is also the content of the belief " that I have a fortune," and of the fear " lest I have a fortune."

Desire, then, on this view necessarily presupposes both an imagined object, and a consciousness of that object. It is easy to see how admirably this account accords with the needs of human psychology, even if it belies the facts. It involves and justifies beliefs which are accepted the more readily because they both reflect and support our preconceived notions of our own natures.

We like to believe that we are capable of conceiving noble and elevated ideals, and that we possess the capacity of pursuing them for long periods in spite of rebuffs and distractions. It is necessary, therefore, to hold a theory of desire which enables the ideal to figure as the consciously conceived object of the desire. We like to believe that we possess the power of rational choice, and of acting consistently along the line chosen. It is natural, therefore, to postulate an act of choice which involves the conscious preference of one desired object to another. We like to believe that we are capable of what is known as virtuous conduct : but in order that virtue may exist, it must at least be possible for us to desire what is difficult and good and to eschew what is easy and wicked, with full consciousness of the meaning of our preference. It is necessary to be aware of the objects you desire in order both to resist and to yield to temptation.

For these and for similar reasons, the psychology of desire that I have just sketched is usually taken for granted by human beings as applied to human beings. With animals however, the case is different. We do not believe that animals are either rational or virtuous, and we are not therefore under the necessity of holding a theory about animals which demands the possibility of their being both. It is, therefore, primarily the investigation of animal behaviour which has suggested the theory of desire, to which I wish to draw your attention.

Desire as a Characteristic of Actions.

In the first place, it is clear that we have no direct knowledge of the minds of animals: we can only observe their actions. We believe that we can tell what animals desire by observing their actions, and, as our self-respect is not under the necessity of forcing us to assume that animals have minds, we do not proceed to infer that the animal is in advance conscious of what it desires. Such a supposition is, in fact, palpably absurd when invoked as an explanation of cycles of actions, which proceed along consistent and well-defined lines in the direction of a definite result. When, for instance, a bird first begins to build a nest, it seems unlikely that it is aware that it will one day lay eggs in it, that it will sit upon the eggs, that it will hatch them, and will feed the young birds that are hatched; if it is not aware that these occurrences will follow, it cannot be said that it consciously desires them or that it desires to produce offspring. It is unnecessary, therefore, to suppose that the bird possesses a mind and a consciousness in order to explain its actions. Similarly, with regard to the phenomenon of hunger. We know the actions which are normally characteristic of hunger: they are a cycle of restless movements continuing and intensifying until food is found, followed by a state of quiescence involving actions of a different order. Once again it is not necessary to infer the existence of a conscious awareness of desire, of the kind which would express itself in a human being in some such words as "By Jove, I am hungry," to explain the activities.

Mr. Russell concludes, therefore, that desire in an animal is not a peculiar state of mind or consciousness, but a characteristic of certain activities, namely, of that cycle of activities which on the ordinary theory of desire would be regarded as inspired by the desire in question. We have seen that the cycle of actions terminates in the case of hunger in a state of quiescence: this state of quiescence is called the purpose of the cycle. The purpose of a cycle of actions is therefore to be defined as whatever brings the cycle to an end—I am of course ignoring the case of accidental interruptions of the cycle—and throughout the period during which the cycle persists, the animal is said to be desiring

the purpose or end of the cycle. The importance of this last point lies in the fact that it introduces a conception of the purpose of a desire, which does not involve a conscious awareness of the purpose in advance by the creature entertaining the desire, but which, on the contrary, only enables the observer to specify the purpose of the series on its completion.

It may, however, be asked whether the initial stimulus which sets the series of actions in motion does not involve a conception of purpose at the beginning of the series. Does not the feeling of hunger involve the idea of food?

This assumption does not appear to be necessary. The origin of the cycle of actions can be adequately explained by the occurrence of certain sensations possessing the property which is called discomfort. These sensations produce a feeling of restlessness which stimulates movements on the part of the creature concerned, which, unless interrupted by another cycle, persist until the sensations of discomfort cease and the feeling of restlessness is allayed. Hence the primitive element in desire, which may be regarded as the mainspring of the whole subsequent process, consists of a kind of aversion from the actual rather than of an attraction to the possible, a distaste for what is rather than a conscious wish for what is imagined. Desire is briefly to be described as a push from behind rather than as a pull from in front.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. So far as I understand you, you have up to the present been speaking of animal psychology. What has this exposition to do with the facts of human desire, and what is its significance for your Life Force theory?

JOHN. The connection is not far to seek. Up to the present, it is true, I have been speaking of the behaviour of animals, but my chief reason in doing so was to let you down lightly. Almost everything that has been said with regard to the phenomena of desire in animals, is true also of desire in human beings.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. Do you mean to say we are not conscious of our desires?

JOHN. I mean to say that we need not be, and that, as a rule, we are not. Most of our desires are unconscious. Take, for example, the evidence of psychoanalysis. Psycho-

analysis shows that we entertain all manner of desires of which we are not conscious. If they do make themselves known to consciousness, they usually undergo a process of sunblimation and appear in consciousness under a totally different guise. Thus a man who wants to elope with his housemaid will develop a sudden liking for curried eggs. But this is by no means the end of the story. By observing people's behaviour you are frequently led to the conclusion, not only that they do not desire the things which they believe themselves to desire, but that their activities do not spring from a desire for an object or goal in the ordinary accepted sense of those words at all. It is not only our desires for disreputable things that are disguised and sublimated by the Censor; we are frequently driven to invent fictitious objects for what would otherwise appear purely irrational and objectless activities.

Thus in all ages men have been attracted by novelty, danger and discomfort: those who spontaneously follow their impulses find that their impulses lead them to assault the Poles, to scale Mount Everest, and to traverse the Sahara. But men are ashamed of owning to activities which spring merely from a love of adventure: their activities must have an object. Hence in all ages they have been driven to pretend that their objectless curiosity, their purely disinterested impulse to make themselves uncomfortable, have been prompted by some rational object or some motive of commercial gain. There is coal to be exploited in Spitzbergen, there are currents to be observed in the Antarctic Ocean, there are observations to be taken from the top of Mount Everest, and so forth. But the motive of gain or the interests of science are mere camouflage, invented to satisfy man's incurable propensity for thinking himself rational. As a matter of fact, all the great discoveries in the world have been made by men who could give no reasonable account of their objects in making the discovery. They were driven by an irresistible curiosity, impelled by a push from behind, moved by some spirit within themselves of which they could give absolutely no account.

It is not necessary then that we should be conscious of the objects of our desires; it is not even necessary that our

desires should have objects; and the deeper the psycho-analysts delve into the mysteries of the unconscious, the less do they find anything resembling a desired object or purpose.

For desires for consciously conceived ends, then, we shall be disposed to substitute tendencies to act in certain ways, and we shall begin to regard the phenomena of desire in a way not dissimilar from that with which the Behaviourist treatment of desire in animals has already made us familiar.

If, then, we revert to the definition of desire already given in the case of animals, we shall find that the behaviour of human beings conforms to it without evincing any glaring discrepancies. With us, as with animals, the initial stimulus that sets a series of actions in motion is some sensation which possesses the property of discomfort. If you are hungry you are aware of a disagreeable feeling inside and a disinclination to sit still; you are restless and commence a series of activities, perhaps those involved in going to a restaurant, sitting down at a table and calling the waiter, which persist until food is obtained. You may, of course, be conscious that this process is occurring, and you may tell yourself that the object of the process is to obtain food. But the presence or absence of this consciousness is a mere incidental phenomenon which in no way affects the process. You can eat without being conscious of the fact—most of us read our morning paper at breakfast—just as you may go down to the dining-room without telling yourself that it is time for dinner, so that it appears to be possible for the whole process, disagreeable mental occurrences, cycle of actions which persist until the disagreeable occurrences are allayed, and subsequent feeling of quiescence, to take place without your being aware at any stage of what is going on. As the initial mental occurrence causing the cycle is the origin of the so-called desire for the state of affairs which brings quiescence, it would seem that desire is in essence unconscious.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. I think I follow you here; but there is one point I should like you to clear up. You admit, I take it, that there is such a thing as conscious desire.

JOHN. Certainly.

The Nature of Conscious Desire.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. Well, if it is the nature of desire to be as you have described it, what is the special characteristic of those desires which are conscious?

JOHN. An unconscious desire becomes conscious through the addition of a true belief as to the object of the desire. The object, as we have seen, is the achievement of a certain state of quiescence, or the occurrence of certain pleasurable sensations. If there exists in advance a true belief as to the nature of the state of affairs which will bring the quiescence or the pleasurable sensations, then the desire may be said to be conscious.

I have already suggested, however, that the beliefs which we entertain as to the objects of our desires are very frequently false beliefs. If you closely observe a man's actions you will often notice that they are calculated to achieve objects which are different from those which he is professing to pursue and believes himself to be pursuing. The real as opposed to the supposed objects of his desire are, needless to say, almost always of a primitive or disreputable character. It is this habit of ours of entertaining false beliefs as to the objects of our desires which so often enables vengeance to masquerade as justice, vindictiveness as discipline and fear as morality.

In this connection, Mr Russell draws attention to a complication which is largely responsible for our attributing so much more important a place to conscious desire than it actually occupies in our psychology. A false belief that something is desired, which is not in fact desired, causes us actually to desire the object falsely believed to be desired. Thus if your wife wishes to elope with another man, your resultant feeling of restlessness or discomfort which will be allayed only by the torture, or at any rate by the discomfiture of the man in question, will probably appear in your consciousness as the desire to shoot big game in Africa. The shooting of big game in Africa will as a result become actually desired, but will almost inevitably be found on realisation to be disappointing, thereby proving itself a secondary or derivative and not a primitive desire. The tendency to

desire the things which we falsely believe we desire, a tendency generated by the occurrence of the false belief in question, explains why we are in the habit of regarding most of our desires as conscious desires. If, however, my previous analysis has any degree of accuracy, it will be obvious that consciousness is only an incidental and intermittent accompaniment of desire, in no way essential to its occurrence, and that the tendency to attribute objects or purposes to desires is as a rule the result of later rationalisation on the part of the person observing the actions to which his desires give rise. There is no reason to suppose that a conscious awareness of the object or purpose necessarily formed part of the psychological history of the individual entertaining the desire.

You will no doubt be wondering why I have involved myself in this lengthy exposition of the Behaviourist view of desire. Yet the reason should be sufficiently obvious. For a person who holds a metaphysic such as I have been endeavouring to set before you the theory is a godsend.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. Please explain how it helps you; beyond the elimination of consciousness . . .

Desire and Thought as the Expression of the Life Force.

JOHN. Ah, but the elimination of consciousness is the thing. The elimination of consciousness from the process which constitutes desiring is only one aspect of that general attack on consciousness, which I referred to at the beginning of my remarks as being characteristic of modern psychology. It is a development which points in the same direction as the theory that sensations form part of the contents of the external world arranged in a certain way. Analyse all mental occurrences into sensations and images which are caused by sensations, and analyse all desires into characteristics of actions prompted by feelings of discomfort and persisting until the feelings are allayed, and the need for a conscious and continuous self or subject begins to disappear.

Instead of an "I" who thinks, an "I" who perceives,

and an " I " who desires, we are left simply with sensations which occur and feelings which are experienced. The bare cognitive act of thinking and the bare cognitive act of desiring, which psychologists used to separate from the content thought and the content desired as distinct elements in our psychology, are no longer required ; and with the elimination of the thinking self and the desiring self as opposed to the thought and the desire, the need for the " ego " itself disappears. " There is a thinking " or " there is a desiring " becomes the correct way of describing what takes place in our psychology, and the laws which relate my thoughts of to-day and my thoughts of yesterday, and relate them more closely than my thoughts of to-day and *your* thoughts of yesterday, instead of being simple and obvious and springing direct from the notion of a continuous self, become complex, derivative and dubious.

Now consider the significance of all this for the theory of the Life Force. We have already sketched an analysis of thought as composed of sensations and images suitably related ; and we have seen that these sensations themselves form part of the outside world arranged in a certain context. Our thoughts, then, depend ultimately upon the sensations we receive, and for these sensations we are not responsible. Similarly, it appears that desire involves no conscious act of choice on the part of an actively willing self : it is a characteristic of certain kinds of action rather than a preference for certain kinds of ends, and of the origin and purpose of these actions we are normally unconscious. It would seem, therefore, that we are not responsible for our desires.

Now, it is just such a state of affairs which the existence and activity of a Life Force, such as I have described, would lead us to expect. Mind, we say, is a certain arrangement of the stuff of matter. Naturally, since the Life Force has only matter to work with ! Thought is in the last resort reducible to sensations and images, the occurrence of which is outside our control. This accords exactly with the view we were led to take of the workings of the Life Force, which puts into the head of the artist ideas and thoughts which he is unable to explain and has no choice but to express. Desire,

we affirm, is in the nature of a push from behind and not of a pull from in front ; it is a characteristic of certain actions of which we are normally unconscious, and which are performed without motive. Is it not just such a piece of machinery that our conception of the Life Force, creating men as puppets to be twitched into life and love, war and death, in conformity with its purposes, irresistibly demands ? It is characteristic of a machine to be unconscious of its working and ignorant of why it works.

PROFESSOR CAMERON. Yes, yes ! It all fits together very nicely ; but isn't there just one little flaw ?

JOHN. What is that ?

PROFESSOR CAMERON. You picture us as puppets of the Life Force. We are responsible, you say, neither for our thoughts nor for our desires. The Life Force, it seems, is in complete control of us, and we respond unerringly to its promptings. Very well ! What, then, of this Free Will that you found yourself driven to admit : and what of the problem of pain and evil and error springing from an all-powerful and all-controlling Life Force, the very problem, if I mistake not, which placed you under the necessity of allowing us Free Will ?

JOHN. I am sorry, I forgot to speak of Free Will ; but even Free Will, I think, can be accommmodated. That we are not responsible for our impulses and desires I think we are agreed : but may we not be responsible for suppressing them ? We cannot say, I shall like doing this or I shall like doing that ; but can we not say, I shall do this or do that ? And it is, I conceive, in the power we possess of repressing the desires and impulses which spring from the Life Force that our Free Will is chiefly exercised. The Life Force we saw was driven to operate upon our unconscious and not upon our conscious, in order that the promptings and energisings which it desired to communicate to us might masquerade as desires of our own, and so contrive to gain expression in action. But even so, many of our desires bear too clearly the mark of their origin to get themselves passed by the psychoanalyst's censor. We all like to think that the actions and desires which are creditable to us express our true nature and are really ours in some sense in which our more regrettable

activities are not, being only temporary aberrations which occur in spite of, and not as an expression of, the real character of the self. Sexual desires are the chief example of these regrettable activities, and it is these which we are most liable to disown, as springing from some source outside ourselves.

Now, our Free Will consists in our power to repress such desires, or at least to sublimate them in such a way as to enable us to entertain a false belief as to what the object of our desire really is. As we have seen, the existence of a false belief as to the purpose of a desire may produce a secondary desire for the object falsely believed to be the purpose of the original desire. Thus, there springs up as a result of repression a whole train of secondary desires in fulfilling which many of us pass the bulk of our lives. These secondary desires are conscious desires, since we possess a true belief as to their object ; and the existence both of the desire and of the true belief is due to the false belief, which is in turn due to the sublimation of the original desire, which is in turn due to our power of Free Will. Thus, secondary desires spring from our exercise of the power of Free Will, and not at all from the Life Force.

But the fulfilment of these secondary desires is disappointing ; it brings little joy. Joy, you may remember, Mr. Banks, was one of the devices of the Life Force—a device upon which I spoke at some length—for insuring that we devoted our lives to its service. Hence the fulfilment of a purely unreflecting Life Force desire, such as the desire to eat or to create, brings joy ; while the secondary desires, which spring from Free Will, are attended with but little joy, since they are artificial and manufactured, the product of reflection and suppression.

" Don't reflect upon your impulses : obey them," might be the motto of a life given to the service of the Life Force. Such a life would be a happy one ; for reflection brings sadness and not joy. " To be a pig happy, or to be Socrates unhappy," is the statement of a choice which symbolises the permanent antithesis between happiness and thought. And the reason for this antithesis is that the desires engendered by the life of reflection are not primitive and authentic, but

secondary and Free Willist ; they are caricatures and sublimations of the promptings of the Force.

Hence, Mr. Banks, I beg of you not to philosophise any more, if you would be happy !

Mr. Banks. Unless, of course, I am one of Anthony's artists.

John. Unless, of course, you are one of Anthony's artists : but in that case, you know, your thoughts must be new.

INDEX

Absolute, the, 14, 79, 231, 232, 246–248
Academic mind, the, 125, 127, 129, 133, 147, 153, 156–158, 205, 206, 220
Achilles, 180
Aldgate Pump, 181
Amœba, the, 65, 100, 101
l'Amour medecin, 130
Analysis of Mind, The, 233
Anatomy of Melancholy, The, 218–221
Arabia Deserta, 210
Aristophanes, 183
Aristotle, 126, 127, 151, 157, 189, 230
Art, 163–226
  academic view of, 169–175, 190, 202, 213, 214
  criticism of the academic view of, 176–183, 200, 202–204
  Life Force theory of, 165–169
  modern, 222–224
Aspasia, 145
Athens, 145, 177, 185, 186
Austen, Jane, 164, 208, 209

Babylon, 92
Bach, 170
Barker, 131
Beauty, Form of, 102, 103, 106
Beerbohm, Max, 182
Beethoven, 155, 204
Behaviourism, 45, 96, 233–239, 275–280
Belief, 241–245, 265, 266
  verifiability of, 247–251
Bennett, Arnold, 210, 213
Bergson, 9, 14–20, 27–30, 35, 57, 58, 61–65, 69, 79, 83–86, 104, 108, 109, 137, 232, 267, 268, 271
Berkeley, 256
Blake, 168
Blucher, 135
Bible, the, 152
Biology, 33
Birth, 113, 115, 117
Botticelli, 244
Bradley, 14, 79
Buddha, 109, 215, 216
Bunyan, 168, 204, 216
Burton, 218, 220, 225
Bury, 99
Butcher, 127
Butler, Samuel, 168, 177
Bywater, 127

Cæsar, Julius, 147, 247
Candida, 152, 193
Capitalism, 136, 143
Carr, Professor Wildon, 24
Catiline, 185
Cause and effect, law of, 58, 63, 253–255
Censor, the, 45–49, 51
Chesterton, 98, 180
Christ, 109, 147, 155, 164, 167, 215, 216
Cicero, 185
Civilisation, 48
Classics, the, 152, 153, 184, 185, 188, 189
Communism, 136, 143
Congreve, 147
Conrad, 192
Creative Evolution, 14
Crock of Gold, The, 214
Cubist movement, 204

Darwin, 38, 56, 57
Defoe, 185
Deirdre, 214
Deity, Limited, 15
Democracy, 92, 143

Demosthenes, 185
Descartes, 151
Desire, 273–283
De Vries, 63
Dialogue, Form of, 10, 11
Dickens, 168, 213
Displacement, 50
Doctor's Dilemma, The, 130
Doughty, 210
Dreams, 49–51, 105
Dualism, 9, 39, 267, 268
Dumas, 213
Duration, 18, 39
Dutch school in art, the, 213
Dynamo-psychism, 71, 72, 77, 78, 80, 81, 85, 86

Economics, teaching of, 136
Education, 132–162
  academic view of, 141, 147, 132, 133,
Einstein, 143, 167, 171, 253
Élan vital, the, 9, 15, 28–30, 65, 81, 84, 86, 137, 267, 268
Elliot, George, 152
Empiricism, 37
Eroica symphony, the, 205
Essay on Women, 69
Etheridge, 204
Euripides, 168
Everest, Mount, 277
Evolution, classical theories of, 56–58, 63, 65

Fabians, 112
Fielding, 152
Forms of Plato, 102–104, 173, 175
Free association, 52, 53
Free Will, 89–91, 113, 166, 272, 282, 283
Freud, 42, 43
From the Unconscious to the Conscious, 33, 62

Geley, 33, 34, 61, 65–69, 71, 73–77, 84–86, 94, 95, 100, 104, 105, 160, 161, 166, 212, 232, 267, 268, 271, 272
  criticism of, 79–84
General Will, 128
Genius, 91, 93, 94, 152
Glyn, Eleanor, 170
God, 7–9, 69, 117, 132, 138, 141, 168, 175, 232, 244
Goethe, 137
Goodness, Form of, 102, 103
Gravitation, the law of, 125, 142
Greece, 187
Green, T. H., 79
Greene, 151
Gulliver's Travels, 182, 221

Hamlet, 211
Hampstead Repertory Theatre, 206
Hardy, 168, 170
Harvey, 171
Heartbreak House, 224
Hegel, 14, 79, 128, 253
Henry V, 134
Henry VI, 134
Henry VIII, 149
Heracleitus, 9
History—
  Greek, 186, 187
  the teaching of, 134, 135, 144
Historical truth, 144–149
Homer, 180, 185
Huxley, 38, 56

Ibsen, 168, 216
Idea of Progress, The, 99
Idealism, 232
Idealists, 79, 256
Ideas, Plato's Theory of, 107, 253
Instinct, 29, 30, 32, 34
Intellect, the, 16–19, 23, 27, 29, 35
Introspection, 112
Intuition, 17, 28–30, 35, 84

James, Henry, 180, 192
  William, 37, 60, 237
Joy, 108, 109, 112, 283
Jung, 42
Juvenal, 187, 188

Kant, 28, 29, 137, 140
Keats, 192
Knowledge, 121, 144, 228, 230, 231, 241, 244, 245, 251, 265
  Behaviourist, conception of, 234–236, 238

Lamarck, 38, 57
Le Roy, 21, 30
Life and Consciousness, 108
Life Force, the, 7–10, 15, 39, 86–91, 95–99, 113, 117, 121, 122,

132, 177, 191, 197, 201, 212, 217, 221, 226, 229, 268–273, 281, 282
criticism of, 121–125
devices of, 87, 88, 91, 93–97, 107, 108, 112, 114–117, 166, 177, 178, 283
limitations of, 89, 90, 197, 271, 272
purpose of, 88, 98, 99, 106, 154, 156, 159, 165, 268
Literature, teaching of, 151–153
Locke, 256
Lorna Doone, 198
Love, 113, 115–117
Lucretius, 188
Lyly, 151

Man and Superman, 206
Mansfield, Lord, 74
Mansfield Park, 209
Marriage, 115
Marx, Karl, 136, 187, 216
Materialist theories, 38
Matter, 197, 232, 261, 269, 271
Subjectivity of, 262–265
Bergson's conception of, 20–27, 84
Matter and Memory, 14
Mechanist theories, 38, 55–58, 63, 83
Megarians, the 145, 230
Memory, 18, 78, 240
Mendelssohn, 170
Meredith, 213
Milton, 147
Mind and Matter, duality of, 267–272
Mnemic phenomena, 260, 266
Moby Dick, 210
Monads, 77, 82
Monism, 39
Moore, George, 192
Mozart, 92, 170, 173

Napoleon, 146, 241
National Gallery, 170
Nelson, 149, 242
Neutral particulars, 257–262
New Materialists, 45
News from Nowhere, 221
Newton, 125, 128, 142, 143, 171, 253
Novel, the realistic, 213
Nunn, T. P., 12

Œdipus complex, the, 54
Old Wives' Tale, 210
Origin of Species, The, 62
Owen, Rev. Vale, 67

Paine, Tom, 145
Parallelism, 58–60, 64
Pater, Walter, 111, 190, 194
Peacock, 152
Peele, 151
Peloponnesian War, the, 186
Pericles, 145
Pheidias, 171
Philosophy, teaching of, 139–141, 151
Pilgrim's Progress, The, 204, 221
Plato, 10, 38, 102–107, 125, 127, 140, 155–157, 159, 173–175, 189, 229, 250, 251, 253
Pleasure, 108, 109, 111, 112
Pliny the Younger, 190, 221
Poe, Edgar Allen, 208
Poetics, Aristotle's, 126
Politics, teaching of, 136, 137
Pope, 188
Pragmatism, 37, 231
Professionalism, 130, 131
Progress, 98, 100–102
Psychoanalysis, 40–55, 61, 73, 75, 79, 84, 85, 107, 126
criticism of, 42–55
Psychology, supernormal, 65–68, 105

Realism in art, 211–213
Realists, philosophical, 256
Reality, Bergson's view of, 17–19, 29
Relativity, theory of, 259
Religion, the teaching of, 137–139 144
Renaissance, The, 111
Representationalism, 256
Repression, 47, 48, 50
Republic, Plato's, 102, 125
Revolution—
the French, 136
the Russian, 136
Rodin, 171
Roman Empire, the, 144, 221
Rosary, The, 198
Round Madonna, the, 170, 244
Rousseau, 136
Rubicon, the, 247
Ruskin, 181

Russell, Bertrand, 45, 48, 136, 233, 239, 240, 242, 252, 253, 255–257, 262, 263, 275, 279
Russia, 241

Sand, George, 152
Sappho, 198
Satan, 206
Satire, 187
Schopenhauer, 9, 15, 39, 62, 69–72, 75, 77, 81, 100, 115, 119, 175, 206
Scott, Dixon, 194–196
Self, the, 77, 78, 80–83, 85, 104
Self-expression, the doctrine of, 110, 111
Self-knowledge, 211–213
Selfridge, 158
Semon, 260
Seneca, 190
Sensations, 258–260
Shakespeare, 124, 151, 152, 164, 168, 169, 171, 173, 245, 251–253
Shaving of Shagpat, The, 214
Shaw, George Bernard, 15, 29, 39, 109, 111, 116, 152, 168, 169, 177, 182, 193–196, 206, 207, 216 224
Socialism, 111, 143
Socrates, 167, 283
Sophocles, 114, 171, 173, 177
Sorel, 136
Soul, the, 105
Sparta, 145
Spinoza, 151
Spiritualism, 62, 66–68
Sports, 63
State, Hegel's theory of the, 128, 129
Stevenson, 190
Stravinsky, 205
Style in literature, 190–197
Sublimation, 50, 126
Swift, 188, 191, 216
Symbolism, 49

Tales of Mystery and Imagination, 208,
Tchekov, 224
Tender-mindedness, 60, 61
Tess of the D'Urbervilles, 113
Thackeray, 213
Thersites, 180
Thing-in-itself, 75, 100
Thucydides, 185, 186
Time and Freewill, 14
Tolstoy, 181, 215
Tough-mindedness, 60, 61
Tragedy, Aristotle's theory of, 126, 151
Trajan, 221
Transmigration, 104
Treasure Island, 198
Truth—
  artistic, 171–174, 244
  Form of, 102, 103
  logical, 243
  mathematical, 243
  scientific, 171

Unconscious, the, 33, 34, 43, 44, 47–49, 56, 61, 72–76, 85, 94–100, 105–107, 160, 161
Universe—
  Geley's conception of the, 77–80
  composition of the, 261

Verlaine, 190
Villon, 190
Virgil, 185
Vitalism, 9, 15, 58, 69, 104
Von Hartmann, 39

Waterloo, battle of, 135, 142, 211
Way of an Eagle, The, 198
Webster, 151
Wellington, 211
Wells, 15, 60, 109, 137, 213
Wilde, Oscar, 110, 112, 190
Will, the, 9, 15, 70–72, 75, 81
  Freedom of, 89–91, 113, 282, 283
Willesden Junction, 192
Wordsworth, 153
Wuthering Heights, 209
Wycherley, 204

Yahoos, 182
Yogi, Indian, 106
You Never Can Tell, 116

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LIBRARY
Los Angeles

This book is DUE on the last date stamped below.

MAR 27 1952
APR 7 1956
RETD BOOK BOX
SEP 1 1962
ORION
LD/URL FEB 07 '90
FEB 04 1990

Form L9-42m-8,'49 (B5573) 444

THE LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
LOS ANGELES

1646 Common-sense
J57C7 theology

University of California, Los Angeles
L 005 838 576 6

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY
AA 000 772 237 4

B
1646
J57C7